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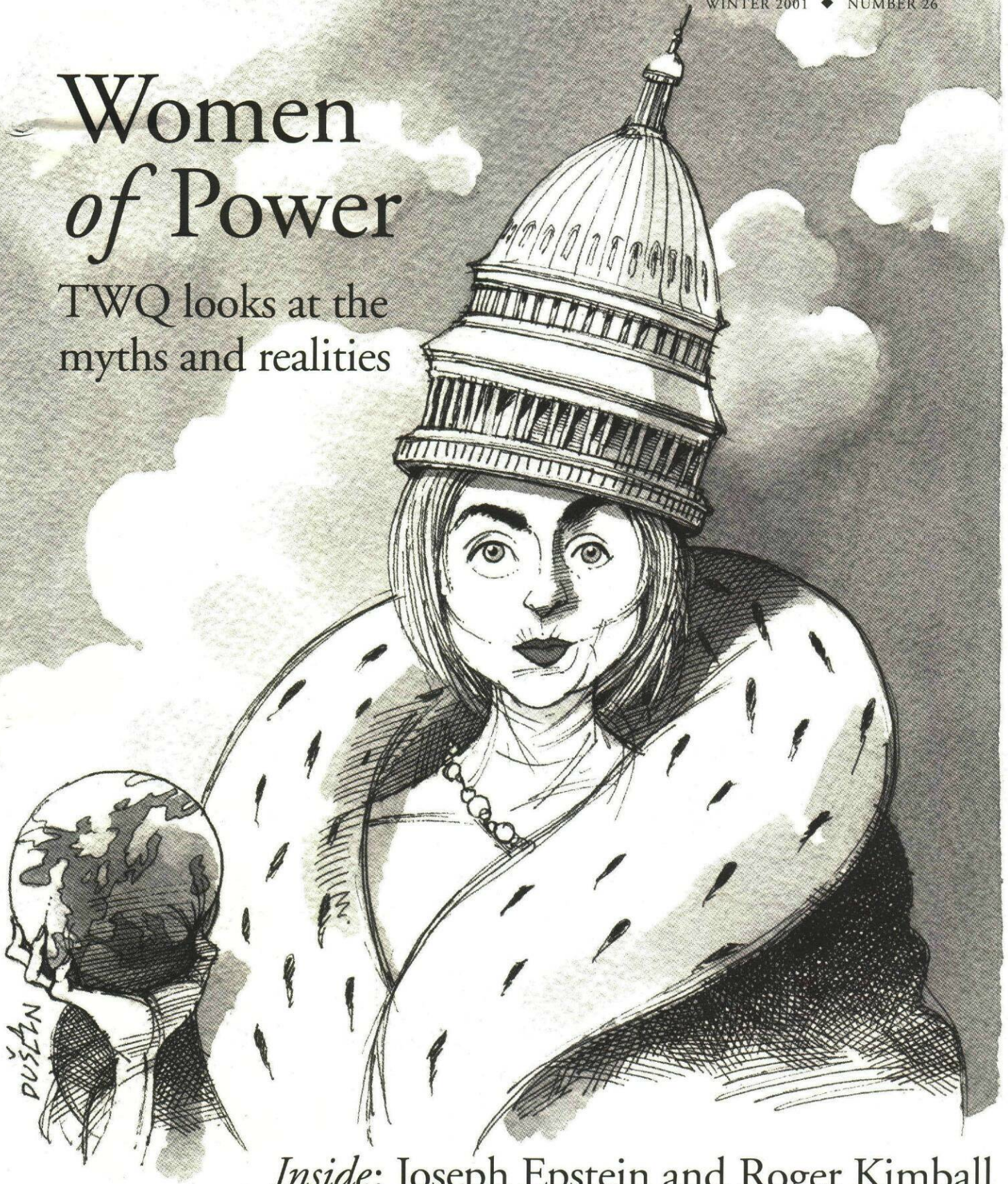
Women *of* Power

TWQ looks at the myths and realities



Inside: Joseph Epstein and Roger Kimball

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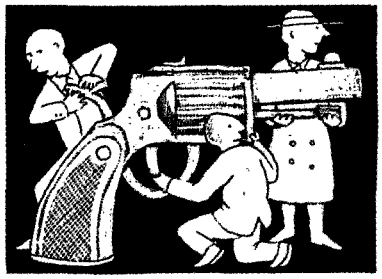
Diary

Better Red Than Dead



ALTHOUGH I DROVE (badly and absent-mindedly) as a teenager, I haven't been behind the wheel of a car in years. This, in general, is a boon for highway safety.

During the presidential "recount" in Florida, however, I considered signing up for yet another round of driving lessons—it would have been my third, but who's counting? I was contemplating moving from Washington, D.C., where I now live, to some part of the map that had gone red on election night, not so much because of the two candidates, but because of the cultural attitudes enshrined by the red and the blue.

Most of the benighted places in red require driving skills. Ironically, I'd spent no small amount of energy escaping from the red part of the map. Of course, my beliefs were different then.

In the mid-1970s, when a sniper climbed onto the roof of the Howard Johnson's in downtown New Orleans, and began firing at people, I was on his side. As a reporter for an "alternative" weekly, I immediately interviewed the most radical black leaders I knew to produce a piece headlined "Nine Black Voices Speak Out." According to my article, conditions in America were such that the sniper's response (which included at least one fatality) was to be expected.

At this time in my life, I averted my eyes whenever I walked past the antique shops on Royal Street. Antique stores were a painful reminder that the few had lived in opulence, while numberless others had suffered to create their riches. After the brutal murder of a young girl under an overpass, I said it was a terrible thing, of course. But now our concern must be with helping the other victim, by which I meant the killer.

My conversion was probably gradual. Still, when I think about it, I always focus on a single, "Road to Damascus" event: You see, I am a former liberal who got mugged. This makes me a walking cliché. The mugging happened one night, when I'd worked at the office well past midnight. Unable to get a taxi, I decided to walk home, through the wino district, which I figured would be safe, and a stretch of New Orleans' central business district, which wouldn't be safe, before I got to the relatively well-policed French Quarter where I lived.

The mugger started shadowing me in the business district. He said something like, "Go with me or I'll kill you," before we scuffled on the concrete pavement. I chased him, screaming so loudly that a bank's guard came to my aid. I didn't bother to call the police.

It was only the next day that I realized I was angry. It was also then that I had my epiphany: No matter what kind of childhood my mugger had endured, no matter what he had suffered, if he had killed me, his act would have been …wrong.

This dazzling idea filled me with a kind of wordless awe. I simply had no vocabulary with which to explain my newfound belief that my mugger was existentially responsible for his actions.

The worst part was that I couldn't explain how this was an eye-opener and not just a highly emotional experience that skewed the way I thought. After all, a public defender friend of mine had recently gotten a client off who almost immediately, while still in the corridors of criminal court, thanked her by turning and pummeling her to within an inch of her life. She insisted that the poor fellow had emotional problems (no doubt true) and remained steadfast in her beliefs. She is still happily working to put dangerous people back on the streets.

Once I began to entertain new (that is, old) ideas, I was on a slippery slope. Before long, I found myself believing all sorts of previously unthinkable ideas. Assigned to cover a federal job training program, I came away convinced that the program hurt the very people it was designed to help.

WHAT IT ALL COMES DOWN TO is whether we are responsible for what we do. Yes, some people are born with the deck stacked against them. But we all still make choices, some moral and some not moral. The people in the red places on the map know this.

So what am I doing still living in Washington's trendy Adams-Morgan neighborhood, one of the true blue spots on the map? It's not just that I despair of learning to drive. But with folks who share the values of the red parts of the map moving into power, Washington is changing, and I don't want to miss the fun. It's going to make some people red in the face.

~Charlotte Hays

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The Women's Quarterly

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IN *THIS* ISSUE

Diary: ***Charlotte Hays*** says it's better to be red than dead 2

How to Keep Your Head...and Other Management Secrets of Liz Tudor, CEO: ***Roger Kimball*** says Queen Elizabeth I's hour has arrived 4

How Do Women Rule? Just Like Men: ***Christine Stolba*** says folks who believe women rulers are nicer don't know their herstory 7

The Two Faces of Paula Jones: ***Kate Kennedy*** says "*Penthouse* Paula" let her down, while ***Anita K. Blair*** argues Paula was seduced and abandoned by her conservative "friends" 10

***Karlyn Bowman*'s Poll-Pourri** 13

***The Women's Quarterly*'s False Courage Awards** 14

Hollywood Courage: ***Joseph Epstein*** reveals what it takes to get a standing ovation nowadays 16

TWQ Interview: ***Mary Lefkowitz*** on Afro-centrism and myth as history 18

The Token Man: ***Byron York*** suddenly realizes that golf magazines are a lot like women's magazines 21

Jock Envy: ***David Shiflett*** predicts that, in our lifetimes, there will never be a female linebacker in the NFL 22

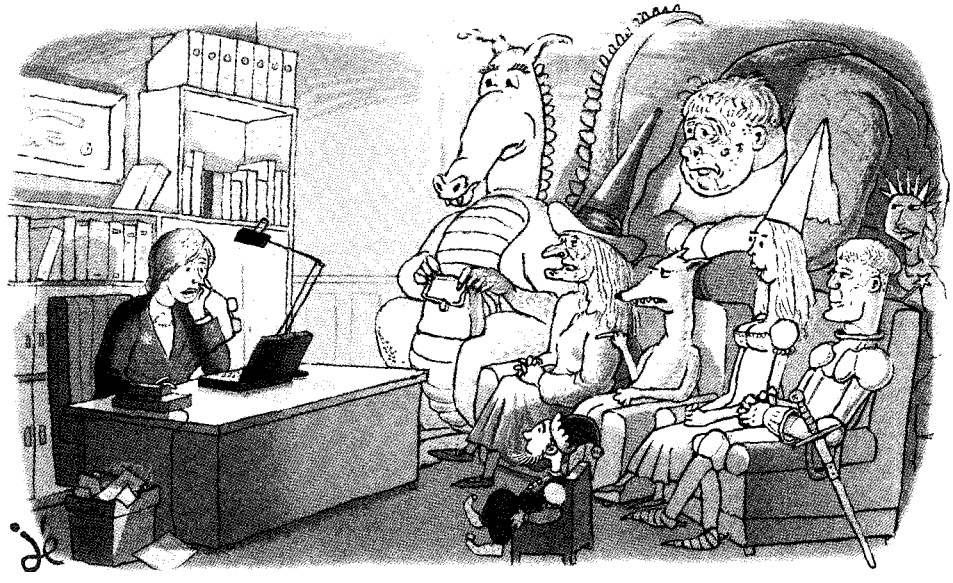
Sidelined!: ***Kimberly Schuld*** on how football wannabe Heather Mercer may have kicked female athletes out of the game 23

NOW—So Very THEN: ***Kathryn Jean Lopez*** introduces the Rippa Van Winkle who is the frontrunner to take over NOW 24

Crazy or Lazy? Inside the Disability World: ***Heather Mac Donald*** shows how generous payments are crippling the system—and the recipients 26

Correspondence 30

One Last Observation: Feminist Holidays
Kathryn Jean Lopez wassails through the year with the sisterhood 31



"OK...clause 27 now reads, 'In the event that the wolf predeceases the ugly giant and at least two out of three wishes have not come true, the evil fairy will retain an 18 percent interest in the magic beans notwithstanding....'"

Cover by Dusan Petricic. Cartoon (above) by Charles Jaffé

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How to Keep Your Head ...and Other Management Secrets of Liz Tudor, CEO

Roger Kimball says Elizabeth I's hour has arrived. She's the subject of a recent movie and several new books. And did you know Liz was into diversity? We thought not

Leadership Secrets of Elizabeth I
By Shaun O'L. Higgins and Pamela Gilberd
Perseus, 286 pages, $20

Elizabeth I, CEO: Strategic Lessons From the Leader Who Built an Empire
By Alan Axelrod
Prentice Hall, 274 pages, $23

THOSE OF US with modest experience of popular business books tend to forget what rich sources of unintended comedy they can be. Consider *Leadership Secrets of Elizabeth I* and *Elizabeth I, CEO: Strategic Lessons from the Leader Who Built an Empire.* The former carries a blurb by Patricia Ireland, president of the National Organization for Women; the latter carries a blurb by former Congresswoman Patricia "Tailhook" Schroeder. Nevertheless, both are among the funniest books I have read all year—not quite in the same league as P. G. Wodehouse, it is true, but then Wodehouse was a genius and he was trying to be funny.

The first question to be asked about these books is, Why now? How is it that Good Queen Bess (1533-1603) suddenly merits the glossy self-help, mildly psycho-babblish, twelve-step, tips-for, secrets-of, everything-you-wanted-to-know-about, strategic lessons for excellence, dummies, idiots, today's modern-woman-who-has-everything treatment? I suspect that there are primarily two reasons: (1) the seemingly unending search for female role models (we're talking to women about women here!) finally has got around to this English monarch; and (2) the recent Hollywood movie *Elizabeth*, which would have reassured publishers that their property had certifiable brand-name recognition. Jane Austen has been around and indeed immensely popular

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for a long time; but it was only when Hollywood got into the act that she became a household name alongside Rosie O'Donnell and Homer Simpson. Well, Jane Austen has had her run. It looks as if Elizabeth Tudor's hour has arrived. (Another sign that this is the year of Elizabeth: The University of Chicago just published *Elizabeth I: Collected Works*, a fine scholarly volume of her speeches, letters, poems, and prayers.)

It goes without saying that marketing is not the whole story. As with Jane Austen, Elizabeth provides a solid foundation of real achievement that makes the public relations efforts a relative snap. Fascination with the Virgin Queen is perennial, and with good reason. She is good copy. She has buzz. Scene 1: Beautiful Young Princess ignored by tyrant father king who beheads her mother and marries another woman. Scene 2: Beautiful Young P imprisoned by half-sister. Scene 3: BYP surprises everyone by triumphing over adversity, becoming queen, and enjoying one of the most successful reigns in history. Curtain.

Is it any wonder that (as we read in *Leadership Secrets*) "the A&E program *Biography* recently ranked Elizabeth among the Top 100 Leaders of the Millennium and described her as 'the spin doctor of a forty-five-year reign'"?

Of course, Elizabeth was also, as one reference book notes, "vain, fickle, vacillating, prejudiced, and miserly." We won't go into that here, partly because it would be the opposite of upbeat—Rule One: Always be upbeat—and partly because Elizabeth, whatever her failings, was (as that same reference work acknowledges) "nonetheless exceedingly successful." Indeed, the Elizabethan Age saw England transformed from what one traveler indelicately called "the arse of the world" to the "blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England" that Shakespeare happily evoked in *Richard II*. When the twenty-five-year-old Elizabeth ascended the throne in 1558, the country was crippled by debt and drained by protracted wars with France to the south and Scotland to the north. It was also terrorized by religious strife.

Elizabeth's father, Henry VIII, broke with Rome and chivvied the Catholics; her half-sister Mary—"Bloody Mary"—rebelled against daddy and set about burning Protestants. England's currency was debased. Inflation was out of control. Ireland was rebelling (some things never change). And culturally the place was Hicksville. The genius of Francis Bacon, Ben Jonson, William Shakespeare, Edmund Spenser, Francis Drake, and Walter Raleigh—the chaps who made the Elizabethan Age a plausible rival to the Age of Pericles—had yet to unfold itself. "Viewed as a business," Alan Axelrod writes in *Elizabeth I, CEO*, England was "a failing business," "a business in need of a turnaround."

Enter Lee Iacocca—I mean Elizabeth. ("What can *YOU* learn from the turnaround *SHE* achieved?" A good question, that, but not one that either book really answers.) A large part of what makes these books funny is their use of language. The combination of anachronism and cliché is masterly. Actually, the humor begins even before you open the books. The fact that Mr. Axelrod is also the author of *Patton on Leadership* is a nice touch (do we have a series here? *Patton on Leadership*; *Elizabeth I, CEO*; *Genghis Khan on Hostile Takeovers*; *Queen Victoria, Chairman of the Board*: The possibilities are...endless). But pure gold is the fact that one of the co-authors of *Leadership Secrets*—Mr. Higgins, the "Elizabethan history expert"—also wrote a book called *W.C. Fields on Business*, while the other, Ms. Gilberd, not only wrote *The Eleven Commandments of Wildly Successful Women*, but is also "a direct descendant of Elizabeth's lady-in-waiting, Dorcas Sydney." Blood will tell.

I especially savored the use these books make of bulleted and numbered lists. *Elizabeth I, CEO*, a volume designed for "top executives as well as middle managers and those just embarking on their careers," promises to tell you how to:

- develop a leadership attitude
- communicate effectively
- establish priorities
- set objectives and goals
- inspire others
- manipulate others ethically
- create loyalty
- build a team
- resolve conflict effectively
- be an effective coach and mentor
- lead by example while minimizing micromanagement

The authors of *Leadership Secrets* also deploy a mean list. "Elizabeth's Lessons in Overcoming Gender Politics" is a masterpiece. So is "Changing the Guard: Elizabeth's Rules of Appointment" (Memo to George W.: Pay attention now!):

1. Keep the cream of the crop.
2. Demand loyalty and honest advice.
3. Seek balance on all fronts so that all opinions will be put forth.

Etc. In short, what we have here is a veritable orgy of vacuous generalities and meaningless slogans. It is really

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quite delicious if you are in the right mood.

I do not mean to suggest that readers will not learn from these books. Both manage to convey a good deal of history along with laments about Elizabeth's "dysfunctional" family and exhortations to "Play to your skill strengths," "Focus on the job," etc. *Leadership Secrets* features a series of boxed mini-biographies that clue us in on Elizabeth's suitors, rivals, and "remarkably talented" advisors, including "her dark and mysterious spymaster" Sir Francis Walsingham, "the dashing and patriotic privateer" Sir Francis Drake, etc. Next week, *East Lynne. Leadership Secrets* also helpfully draws parallels between the challenges facing Elizabeth and those faced by the modern corporate executive.

If you have always longed to read the "mission statements" of Costco, Ford, Starbucks, or Bell Atlantic, this is your chance. They're all here. Perhaps you did not know—I certainly didn't—that Elizabeth I was an ardent champion of diversity. But so she was. The female president and CEO of Lucent Technologies Canada Corp. tells us so: "Whether you are the leader of an empire, a corporation or a family, diversity is key. As Queen Elizabeth I so evidently knew, surrounding yourself with the best and the brightest, embracing diverse points of view and fostering free expression leads the way to unleashed creativity, unmatched innovation, and unlimited success." Not that Bess was up-to-date on everything. "Elizabeth was, perhaps, least skilled in the democratic style of ruling," we read, "(but, it must be remembered, democracy was little practiced in her age)." Thanks for that reminder!

At bottom, these books are pretty much interchangeable. *Elizabeth I, CEO* is slightly less "pop" and provides a more continuous narrative. It also contains, under the rubric "Make a Strong Impression," this sterling bit of advice: "Feeling weak? Feeling tired? A trifle down? You don't have time to look for some secret source of strength and rejuvenation. Just stop whining, take a deep breath, and fake it." Is Pat Ireland listening?

Perhaps the most useful portions of these books are the passages they quote from its subject. Both have all the good bits from Elizabeth's writings: her response, when praised for her fluency in foreign languages (she knew six), that it was "no marvel to teach a woman to talk" but "far harder to teach her to hold her tongue"; her observation that "I studied nothing else but divinity till I came to the crown, and then I gave myself to the study of that which was meet for government"; and the so-called "Golden Speech," her 1601 address to Parliament in which, reflecting back on her reign, she concluded that "To be a king and wear a crown is a thing more glorious to them that see it than it is pleasant to them that bear it. . . . And though you have had, and may have, many princes more mighty and wise sitting in this seat, yet you never had nor shall have, any that will love you better." Mr. Higgins and Ms. Gilberd tell us that this speech is "a composite statement of Elizabeth's leadership secrets in practice." It was at any rate a very good speech.

Both books also give due prominence to Elizabeth's most famous speech, her address to the troops at Tilbury dock on August 9, 1588, when an invasion from Spanish troops was expected at any moment:

> *My loving people, I have been persuaded by some that are careful of my safety to take heed how I committed myself to armed multitudes, for fear of treachery. But I tell you that I would not desire to live to distrust my faithful and loving people. Let tyrants fear: I have so behaved myself that under God I have placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and goodwill of my subjects. Wherefore I am come among you at this time . . . being resolved in the midst and heat of battle to live and die amongst you all, to lay down for my God and for my kingdom and for my people mine honor and my blood even in the dust. I know I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king and of a king of England too—and take foul scorn that Parma or Spain, or any prince of Europe should dare to invade the borders of my realm; the which rather than any dishonor shall grow by me, I myself will venter [sic] my royal blood; I myself will be your general, judge, and rewarder of your virtue in the field.*

As the critic Paul Dean observed, "Nothing like this was heard again from a British leader until 1940, and nothing like it has been heard since." Elizabeth Tudor was undoubtedly one of the greatest sovereigns in history: wily, circumspect, effective, and ultimately benevolent. If these silly books bring readers closer to this amazing figure or the amazing age over which she presided, they can be forgiven everything. ◆

Roger Kimball is managing editor of the New Criterion.

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How Do Women Rule? ...Just Like Men

Susan Estrich says that when women have power, they will listen more and talk less. ***Christine Stolba*** says Estrich should brush up on her herstory

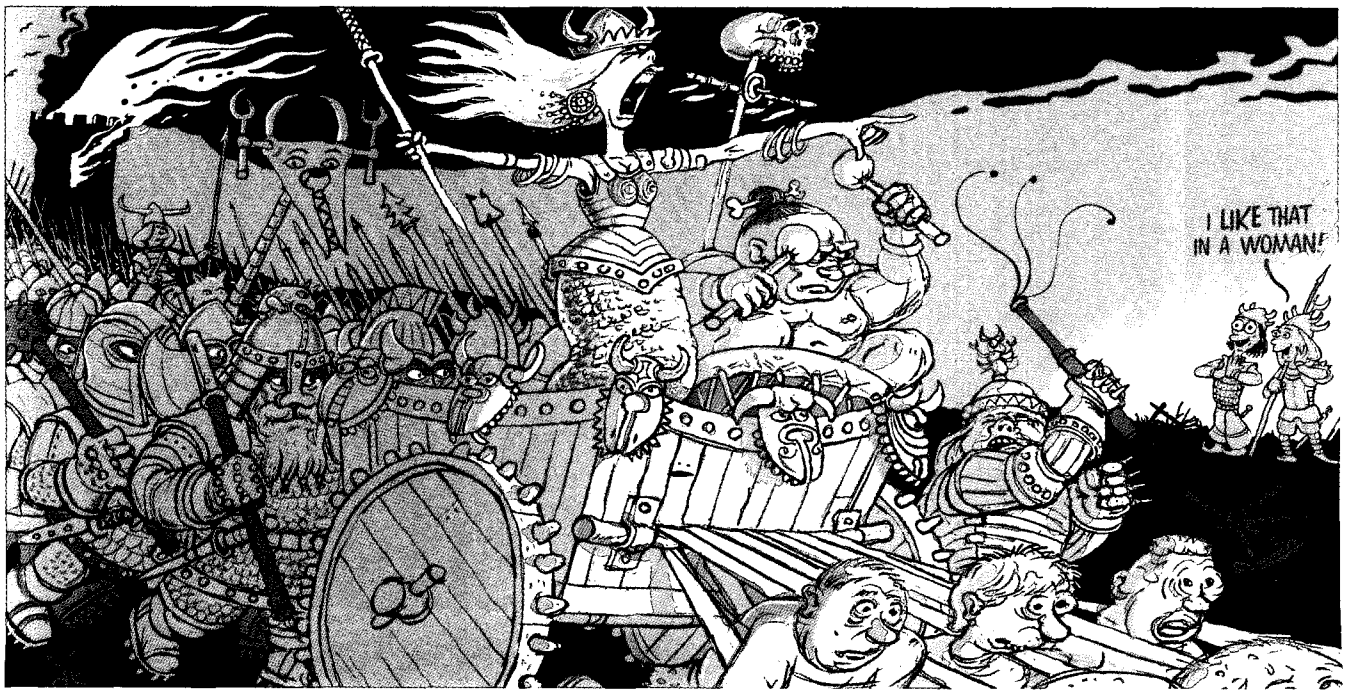
"New archeological evidence shows Boadicea, the warrior queen who led the Britons in revolt against the Romans, in a very different light: as a calculating, vengeful and brutal military leader, who methodically razed cities."
—The Observer, *December 3, 2000*

"CAN WE BRING OURSELVES to recognize our common interest as women and wield power on the basis of it?" feminist and former Dukakis campaign manager Susan Estrich asks in her new book, *Sex & Power*. And how might women exercise power? Women, Estrich chirps, "talk less, and let others talk more; listen more, exercising influence and wielding power indirectly . . . the discussion is more open; and conflicting views are more often and more readily voiced."

Who's she kidding? History abounds with sagas of powerful women who did not let others talk more, weren't good listeners, and didn't particularly relish the open exchange of conflicting views —who were, in short, as manly, if not more so, than men.

Want to raze a village? Boadicea, England's warrior queen, was just the gal to get the job done. A revered figure and a sentimental favorite of Victorian painters, Boadicea is commemorated by a statue that stands on Westminster Bridge, near the Houses of Parliament. She is remembered for her bravery in leading a revolt against her country's occupiers, the Romans, in 60 A.D. Alas, recent discoveries at an archeological dig near Colchester—a town seized and destroyed by Boadicea—led dig director Philip Crummy to compare Boadicea's program and tactics to "ethnic cleansing" in the Balkans.

Boadicea's brutality was noteworthy, even by the standards of her era. A dismayed Crummy marveled to the *Observer*: "These were not flammable buildings. But they were leveled. It was a murderous, determined, intensive, and deliberate attack." Historians estimate that 70,000 Romans and their "collaborators" perished before the Roman general Paulinus' legions caught



Drawing by Charles Jaffé

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up with Boadicea's rebel force. Rallying her soldiers from her chariot, Boadicea fought on against the superior Roman army. Once surrounded, she drank poison rather than surrender.

Nor did Boadicea's distaff descendants shy away from violent displays of power. Mary Tudor, the daughter of Henry VIII, didn't earn the sobriquet "Bloody Mary" by listening to conflicting views. Perhaps no female figure has better understood power and how to keep it than Mary Tudor's sister, Queen Elizabeth I. During her reign (1558-1603), England became a great power with a prosperous economy and the beginnings of a colonial empire. Elizabeth, who was known to relish a good bear-baiting, evinced a genius for diplomacy, often using the lure of marriage to reel in foreign allies. Elizabeth was not, however, particularly gifted at recognizing her common interest with other women: In 1587 she ordered the beheading of the charming and clever Mary Queen of Scots. (Apparently Mary also lacked the ability to recognize a common interest with other women—she had been involved in a plot to murder Elizabeth and seize the English throne.)

Women across the Channel were equally tough. Catherine de' Medici, the queen consort of Henry II of France, helped plan, and convinced a reluctant Charles IX to carry out the bloody Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre of France's Protestants in 1572, an event that triggered a resumption of the Wars of Religion.

A modern leader both Boadicea and Elizabeth likely would have admired was Margaret Thatcher. During her tenure as the longest-serving British prime minister of the twentieth century, Thatcher launched the Falklands War. She maintained a steely posture during the waning days of the Cold War and pursued an unwavering path of free market expansion.

And then there's former first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, who was often vilified for her attempts to wield influence without accountability—and indeed, received a much-deserved drubbing for her health care debacle. But the fact remains that she has always had a keen understanding of how power works. White House insiders have noted that Hillary took a much more combative approach to impeachment than her husband; one assumes she will now put her understanding of power to work in the U.S. Senate.

Throughout history women have also not been above deploying a finely calibrated combination of feminine wiles and old-fashioned politicking to exercise power behind the scenes. One exemplar was the eleventh century's Lady Godiva, the wife of Leofric, earl of Mercia. When Leofric refused to heed her entreaties to lower the region's heavy tax burden, Godiva rode naked through the town of Coventry in protest.

DESPITE THE LESSONS of history, flaky models of cooperative power-sharing (not to mention the introduction of ugly neologisms such as "womanpower," which has found its way into the *American Heritage Dictionary*) remain popular with feminists. Feminist theorist Kathleen Jones, for example, proposes in her book *Compassionate Authority* that women should use power to create more cooperative and compassionate models of governing. Rather than pursuing power to dominate, she says, women should be trying to construct a "woman-friendly" concept of authority. "What constitutes authority, for women, is exactly what is feared most by men," she writes, "sustained connections, or what Freud called the altruistic urge for union in relationship to others." One wonders where that altruistic urge was when Boadicea was slaughtering Romans.

Others have indulged their longing for "herstories" of powerful women, and in the process constructed theories about the benevolent, matriarchal exercise of power. Though by now anthropologists reject claims that early societies were matriarchal, some feminist theorists still cling to the idea that primitive matriarchies once dotted the globe.

The idea of matriarchal utopias, where women acted as more responsible stewards of power than men, was best described in Charlotte Perkins Gilman's 1915 feminist fiction, *Herland: A Lost Feminist Utopian Novel.* In Gilman's Herland, perfection means the utter absence of men, and hence "parthenogenic births producing only girl children."

Herland is also a place where the lack of men presumed peaceful harmony in all things. It is a country of beautiful gardens, well-kept houses, and centralized daycare facilities where "everything was beauty, order, perfect cleanness, and the pleasantest sense of home over it all." If it takes a village to raise a child, then Herland would meet with any good feminist's approval. The three bumbling men who happen upon this Amazonian oasis offer awed descriptions of the place; they wonder aloud at the society's orderliness and lack of rancor, and are fine foils for Gilman's message of female empowerment.

In reality, societies ruled by women don't remotely resemble the mythic Herland. They have witnessed the same sorts of coups, corruption, and intrigue as male-led nations. All is not order, cleanness, and benevolent harmony. In contemporary Bangladesh, for example, Sheik Hasina, the daugh-

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ter of the country's first president, and Khaleda Zia, widow of another former president are locked in a bitter power struggle. Their arch-rivalry is the cause of national paralysis; the legislature remains deadlocked while their feud rages on. In Sri Lanka, where Sirimavo Bandaranaike became the first woman prime minister in 1960, the political matriarchy now run by Bandaranaike's daughter (President Chandrika Kumaratunga) is plagued by allegations of corruption.

Like Thatcher, Indira Gandhi was a leader who understood power—and so ruled like a man. She favored an authoritarian over a cooperative ruling style after becoming prime minister in 1966. Though she was called the "Mother of India," Gandhi did not hesitate to pursue rather unmotherly activities such as intervening in Pakistan's civil war and bringing India into the nuclear age by acquiring atomic weapons. When opposition to her government increased in 1975, she responded by suspending civil liberties and jailing her opponents. Briefly forced from power in 1977, she returned triumphant a few years later and ruled until she was assassinated by her own Sikh bodyguards in 1984. In a fitting tribute to her martial style, her corpse was "waltzed around New Delhi on a Soviet howitzer," as the *National Review* described it.

This is not the kind of power that contemporary feminists admire. Feminists such as Susan Estrich believe that women share a common set of interests that can and should be transformed into united political action to achieve power. Why, she says, do we "act singly, when our greatest power would come from collective action?"

It would seem incumbent upon anyone who wrote a book titled *Sex & Power*, at least to make mention of the women throughout history who have successfully melded the two. But Estrich's interests are far more parochial —indeed, hers is an extended exercise in navel-gazing among well-educated, white, upper-middle-class women like herself. Estrich's laboratory is not the rough-and-tumble world of geopolitics, but the world of the corporate and educational elite. Estrich's ideal society would be a cozy corporate coven where women's ways of wielding power would reign supreme. Hers is a vision of "womanpower" that suggests a world of power-sharing. In this world, the pursuit of power is a personal journey for women, not the merciless game of give-and-take that power really entails.

Not only do feminists reject the clash of ideas, and even the clash of arms, that is required to exercise power, they picture an unrealistic world of power-sharing on the basis of sex. In her book, Estrich describes how a female faculty member at Harvard Law School earned Estrich's enmity because she refused to use her position to promote women. The ungrateful wretch "had no sense of the special responsibility she bore precisely because she was a woman," Estrich writes, declaring that the woman's behavior was "worse than being ungrateful, closer to treacherous than just bad manners."

Estrich envisions a world where "women cross the predictable lines of party, or neighborhood, or class, or employer, or division, when we don't fall for divide-and-conquer." Yet she fails to prove that there is or has ever been agreement among women about what our collective interests should be.

Only once does Estrich reveal a glimmer of understanding of how power really works. Towards the end of her book, buried amid a complaint about women trying to please men, she notes that "Sometimes it is better to be feared than loved." This is the understanding of power that Boadicea and Margaret Thatcher possessed.

Ultimately, the lesson Estrich and her ilk have yet to learn is that power requires sacrifice and brings with it responsibilities—and many ugly realities. Contemporary feminism has never adequately grappled with the requirements of personal responsibility (hence the hysteria over sexual harassment).

Moreover, to paper over weak or indecisive leadership by calling it "cooperative" or "compassionate" is a luxury available only during times of peace and prosperity. As Irving Kristol recently noted in the *Wall Street Journal*, the expansion of the new, maternalist welfare state, with its glorification of limitless compassion, can continue only so long as external threats are minimal. The maternalists' eagerness to spend money on social programs—and their intense dislike of military expenditures and other "paternalistic" enterprises—ignores the reality that the United States will always have enemies, and thus will always need to protect itself with the use of force. The meek might inherit the earth, but the weight of human history is behind the observation that only the strong survive.

In the end, we should expect women to understand this lesson as well. Women in power should be held to the same standards as men, and should exercise their authority with a clear-eyed responsibility. Women should be able to wield force when necessary. That is real power. And it is a game with gender-neutral rules. ◆

Christine Stolba, Ph.D., is a member of the national advisory board of the Independent Women's Forum.

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The Two Faces of Paula Jones

Kate Kennedy was on Paula's side—until she posed for *Penthouse*

FROM THE DAY Paula Jones came out with her allegations of sexual harassment against former President Clinton, her detractors tried to smear her. Ever since, I wanted her to fight back hard and prove them wrong.

Paula didn't have the academic credentials of Anita Hill, the singing talent of Gennifer Flowers, the platinum blond hair of Dolly Kyle Browning, the tasteful style of Kathleen Willey, or the incredible audacity of Monica Lewinsky. But when pundits sneered about her trailer park roots, as if this were a form of moral turpitude, I desperately wanted her to win. Sticks and stones may break her bones, but the snotty, Washington chattering class?

I wanted Paula to be remembered as the ordinary woman who stood up to the most powerful sexual predator in the world for one thing: her reputation. An honorable aim, I thought. But she has let me down—big time.

When the subject of posing nude for *Penthouse* was broached last spring, our gal was emphatic: "I will never pose nude for any men's magazine—never. And that's all I have to say about that," she vowed on national television.

Ah, but that was then and this is now. In the December issue of *Penthouse*, Paula Jones stepped back into the limelight with her enhanced naked body. The nudie pix were accompanied by a self-pitying interview, in which Jones confides to new best friend, Joe Conason, co-author of *The Hunting of the President*, that she was used by the "far right" to bring down the president.

"What happened, Paula?" asked Larry King of CNN, summing up the question for many of Paula's supporters. Referring to her unequivocal "never," Paula explained to King, "I meant

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it at the time, but I changed my mind." She added: "Any woman and anybody in the world has a right to change their mind at any point in time, and at that point in time I meant what I said, but I changed my mind."

I got to thinking about that phrase —"I changed my mind"—and it's allowed. I just bought a pair of pants from Ann Taylor. They looked great in the flattering store lights and three-way mirrors. But when I tried them on under the harsh, realistic glow of my halogen lamp at home, they looked horrible. I changed my mind. I took them back. We're all entitled to change our minds. But my Ann Taylor about-face isn't quite the same as posing for *Penthouse.*

Changing one's mind about returning a pair of wool pants versus taking off those wool pants for every member of the male species to see is an entirely different thing. In changing her mind on this momentous decision, in going back on her word, Paula gave those of us who once believed in her...the right to change our minds, too.

I expected more from Paula. For some reason or another, I did. The *Penthouse* episode tells me a couple of things about Paula, things that I didn't know, all of which disappoint me: She doesn't care about her cause, her place in history, what her detractors said about her then and the uncontrolled snickers they have now. Her excuse is that she needed money. For Paula, the expenses of life turned out to be more important than the reputation for which she launched a national crusade.

"I'm an adult woman," she said, "and I made the choice to [pose] based on the fact that it was something that I needed to do...and of course, it was—the money had something to do with it, you know." Yes, we know now.

She even tries to portray posing for the gynecologically-inclined rag as somehow altruistic, a maternal duty owed to her sons' college fund. "[At] any other time I would have never chose to do this," she continued, "but it was at a point and time in my life that I needed to pay taxes, I had legal funds—had taxes to pay. I had different things that needed to come up. I'm a single mother now with two little boys that I really need to support, and hopefully, I'm wanting to put them through college and maybe set up a college fund. And why not do it? I mean, you know, why not?"

No mother does her child a favor when she strips in front of a camera. Which leads me to my last remaining question: What happened to the $850,000 settlement, Paula? What happened to that money? "I only got just a very small portion of that, and the rest went to pay attorney fees. And as a matter of fact, I still owe some attorneys some of the money, some more money."

I'm sure there are many expenses in Paula's life: the expense of raising sons, the cost of living, the nose job, the make-over—they all cost something, and they all add up. But there is also a cost of posing for *Penthouse.*

And what might that be? Well, reputation for one thing. Paula has given ammunition to commentators like Cynthia Tucker who wrote, "She's money-hungry; she's a publicity-seeking exhibitionist who could not stand for her fifteen minutes of fame to end; she was a rube used by the right-wing forces to bring down the Clinton presidency." Thanks, Paula.

James Carville became known, during the 1992 presidential campaign, for the slogan: "It's the economy, stupid!" Those infamous words were inscribed on the War Room walls. There have been variations of this saying and now, I'd like to add one more to the list: It's your reputation, stupid!

Now it seems as though Paula owes an apology to me and the rest of us who believed in her. The moral of the story is this: A price tag cannot be placed on one's reputation. It's priceless. It's either a good one, or it's not. Paula had every right to change her mind. She'll just have to pay a hefty price for it. ◆

Kate Kennedy is campus projects manager for the Independent Women's Forum and associate editor of SheThinks.org.

Anita K. Blair says don't pick on Paula. She was seduced and abandoned—by her conservative "friends"

"She's a real sweet girl, but dumb as a post."

I'VE NEVER MET Paula Jones, but that's how someone who knew her described her to me in May 1994. My informant was explaining why the former president's accuser needed surrogates to speak for her in the media.

Essentially, if Paula had been asked about "distinguishing physical characteristics," she wouldn't have been able to answer—not out of delicacy but simply because those are awfully big words.

If only Paula had kept her blouse buttoned as well as her mouth. Paula Jones should not have posed nude for *Penthouse*, but neither should she have been left naked in the public eye—

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seduced and abandoned by her former allies.

Paula Jones, now a single mother of two, explained that she had to do it, telling Larry King she hasn't worked in nearly ten years. She needs money, she said, to pay $20,000 to the IRS.

With all the free legal advice given her about executive immunity and constitutional separation of powers, did no one ever think to tell her about quarterly tax withholding payments? Especially knowing (as the whole television-viewing world knows) that she's "dumb as a post"?

"PAULA WAS my Rosa Parks," mourned Ann Coulter, one of the "elves" who secretly provided legal help in the *Jones v. Clinton* lawsuit, upon learning of Paula's *Penthouse* gig. "She used to have dignity and nobility and tremendous courage. Now she's just the trailer-park trash they said she was."

Well, not exactly. The tragedy is that sweet, dumb Paula never was Rosa Parks, Joan of Arc, or Judith Holding the Head of Holophernes.

She was Shannon Faulkner.

When a tearful Shannon washed out of The Citadel in the pouring rain in August 1995, I criticized her feminist handlers, telling reporters, "Don't blame Shannon. She's just a kid. But where are the grown-ups? Is there anyone in Shannon's life who cares about her, rather than just about busting The Citadel?"

Apparently there was such a person. We lost track of Shannon Faulkner after she did a tour with NOW, where she underwhelmed crowds who came to view their feminist heroine. *Boston Globe* writer Jill Zuckman interviewed Shannon shortly after she'd been mistakenly admitted to The Citadel and found her "awkward and rather inarticulate, a simple teenager who never anticipated the uproar her prank would spark." In contrast, Faulkner's mother, says Zuckman, "was brimming with enthusiasm for the coverage the story prompted."

The tragedy is that sweet, dumb Paula never was Rosa Parks.

❖

But Faulkner's quest to crash The Citadel did win her one true friend—Pat Conroy, famous (or notorious) Citadel alumnus and author of *The Great Santini* and *The Lords of Discipline*. Conroy himself lost many friends as he vigorously campaigned for Faulkner to be admitted to his *alma mater*.

The night before Faulkner went to Charleston to enroll at The Citadel, Conroy and other supporters attended a party in her honor. He later wrote, "At that party I knew that Shannon did not have the slightest chance of surviving the plebe system. As I listened to Shannon, I realized that no one at the ACLU or NOW had given a thought to preparing this child for the test of fire she was about to endure."

The child failed the test—ignominiously. Her feminist coterie faded away. Conroy later wrote, "I knew, much better than she or her family, that the news media and the ACLU and NOW and everyone else who celebrated her would disappear from her life as though she never existed."

Then Conroy saw his duty and he did it. "I wanted to say when the smoke had cleared and the shouting and the fevers had cooled that Shannon Faulkner had been put through college by a Citadel man."

Yes, Conroy paid for Shannon Faulkner to finish college. She graduated from Anderson College in 1999 and at latest report has become a teacher. We don't know if she has renounced NOW and the ACLU—but at least she's managed to stay out of the centerfolds.

Where was Paula's Pat Conroy? True, an anonymous benefactor paid for Paula to get her nose bobbed. This may have raised Paula's self-esteem, but it did not make her employable (except, apparently, by *Penthouse*).

Surely among the vast right-wing conspiracy someone could have given her a decent job, helped her manage her finances—maybe even found her a new husband and provided a man in the house for those two little boys.

Indeed, Conroy paid Shannon Faulkner's college expenses to redeem the shame he felt The Citadel deserved. So why hasn't some kindhearted liberal stepped forward to show up the mean-spirited conservatives? Couldn't Gene Lyons and Joe Conason have written Paula's "as told to" story to generate a little stream of royalties for her? Bob Bennett's megafirm, Skadden Arps, must always need additional relief receptionists.

Of course, I've still never met Paula Jones, and for all I know she may be not only dumb as a post but greedy and lazy as well. Maybe her "friends" deserted her for a good reason. But if that's so, I think it's doubly sad that someone who was once "real sweet" sustained such damage in such a cause.

Paula Jones is no lady, but she is a human being, and at one time in her life she showed considerable dignity, nobility, and courage. We owe her respect and, yeah, maybe for all that we owe her a living, too. ◆

Anita K. Blair is president of the Independent Women's Forum.

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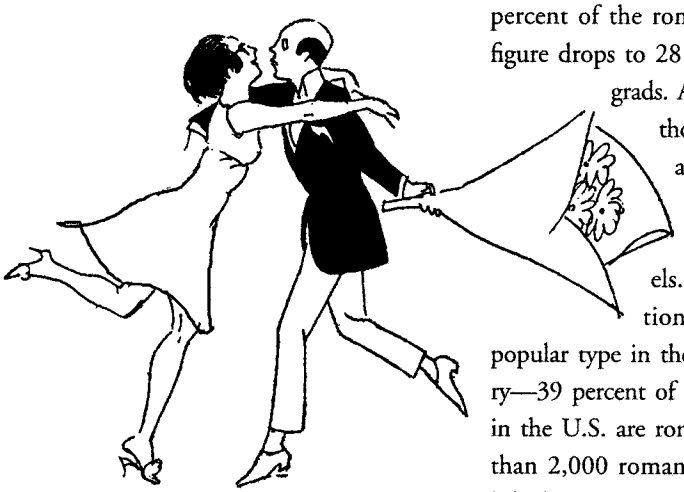
KARLYN BOWMAN'S

Poll-Pourri

Love *Sweet* Love



Love Calling

THE RULES on girls calling boys on the telephone have been rewritten. In 1950, when Gallup asked whether it was all right for a girl to call a boy and ask him for a date—say, to the movies—29 percent said it was okay, but 63 percent disapproved. (Just 17 percent of women approved, while 38 percent of men did.) But in December 1999, when Gallup repeated the question, the results had flipped. Seventy percent of the total group said it was okay, but 28 percent disapproved.

Bodice-Ripping Love

EVEN THOUGH the Romance Writers of America (RWA)—which represents practitioners of the art—elected its first male president last year, Harold Lowry, who writes under the pseudonym Leigh Greenwood, romance fiction continues to appeal to an overwhelmingly female readership. One in every three women read a romance novel last year, while only one in every thirty men dipped into the genre. Education is also a factor. High school graduates are the largest consumers of romance novels, according to the RWA, making up 32 percent of the romance market. The figure drops to 28 percent for college grads. A mere 9 percent of those with post-graduate degrees or some post-graduate work read romance novels. Still, romance fiction remains the most popular type in the paperback category—39 percent of the paperbacks sold in the U.S. are romance novels. More than 2,000 romance titles were published in 1999, ringing up sales of $1.3 billion.

Love at First Sight

DO CUPID'S ARROWS hit men more than women? Men are more likely to believe in love at first sight (55 percent) than women (49 percent). Fifty-two percent of Americans surveyed last year by Gallup believe in love at first sight—40 percent don't—and of the believers, more than two-thirds said they had experienced the phenomenon. Seventy-four percent told Gallup they believed in "one true love." The oldest and youngest age groups in the population were most likely to believe in a special someone, with many in the former having experienced long unions, and many in the latter hoping to. Roper Starch Worldwide reports that roughly equal numbers of Americans fell in love (9 percent) and ended (8 percent) romantic relationships last year. But Cupid may be heading for an age-discrimination suit—virtually no one over the age of sixty in the Roper surveys reported falling in or out of love last year.

Head or Heart?

ACCORDING TO Maritz Marketing Research, men and women are equally likely to believe that it is more important to follow your heart (58 percent) than your head (41 percent) in choosing a spouse or significant other. Maritz tells us that women were more likely than men to consider themselves romantic (67 to 59 percent). Seventy-two percent of the eighteen to twenty-four year-olds of both sexes said they were romantic, compared to 54 percent of those over sixty-five.

First Love

WE MAY MOVE ON, but many of us never forget our first love. In a March 2000 survey for the *New York Times*, 59 percent of those surveyed told Blum & Weprin that they still think about their first teenage love. Forty percent, however, do not.

The Real Thing

SEVENTY PERCENT OF MEN and 77 percent of women in a Wirthlin Worldwide survey for Häagen-Dazs agreed with this statement: "Romance is just thoughtfulness. Washing windows, changing diapers, or performing other chores can be romantic because it shows that someone cares enough about me to do something I don't like to do." ❤

Karlyn Bowman is a resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.

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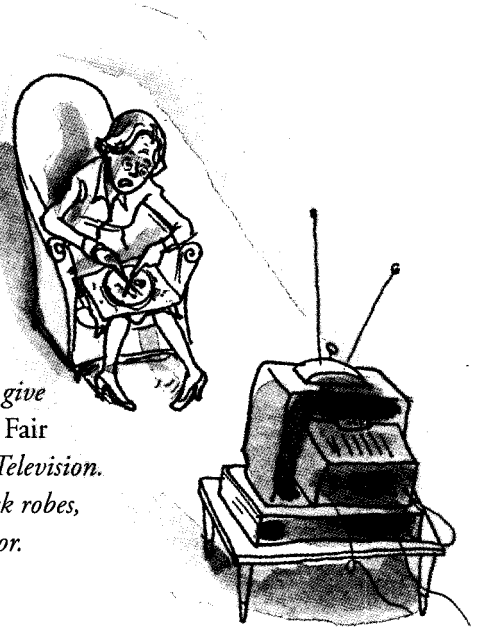
THE WOMEN'S QUARTERLY'S

False Courage Awards

And the envelope please…

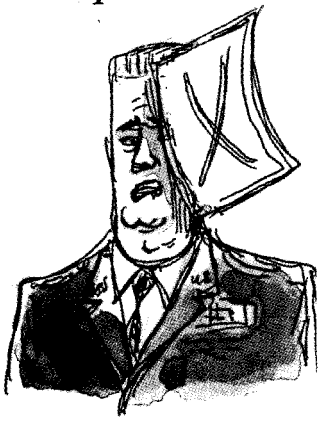


WE TRIED TO IMAGINE what would happen if America's punditeers got together to give out medals for virtuous gestures and other headline-garnering acts of valor. Vanity Fair *would host the black-tie party, which would no doubt be carried live on Lifetime Television. The Florida Supremes would autograph rulings and do the macarena in their black robes, while Florida Secretary of State Katherine Harris would be turned away at the door. Wee George Stephanopoulos would serve as master of ceremonies.*

Harvard Calling Award

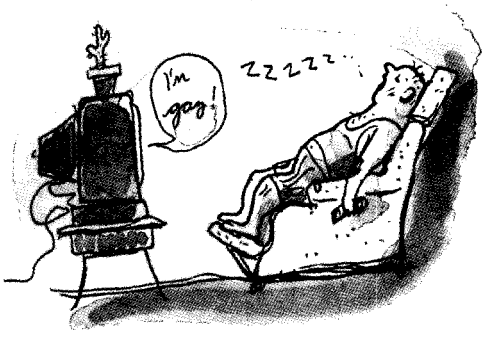
AS THE RETRO Virginia legislature imposed a "moment of silence" on the schoolchildren of the state, a handful of teens at the prestigious Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology courageously stomped out of the room to protest. Better yet, their parents transformed them into plaintiffs in an ACLU suit challenging the moment of silence. The *Washington Post* enthused: "In an era when pundits and politicians routinely bemoan the state of America's youth, the young plaintiffs in the ACLU suit shatter the stereotype that many teenagers are self-centered and obsessed with video games and hanging out at the mall." Roy Kupersmith, father of Jordan, a teenager who has already endured detention hall for his anti-silence beliefs, says he is proud of his son but admits he fears that Jordan's bravery may cause him to be "bounced" by the college of his choice. Sure, bounced from Princeton to Harvard. We can already envision his college admissions essay: "How I Stood Up to the Religious Right."

Don't Slap His Face —Slap Him with a Complaint Award



ONE THREE-STAR ARMY COED risked everything to stand up for all women. When Maj. Gen. Larry Smith "grabbed her, held her against her will, and kissed her," Lt. Gen. Claudia Kennedy, the army's highest-ranking woman, held her tongue. Four years later, when Smith was nominated as the army's deputy inspector general, General Kennedy had the courage to relive the horror and file a formal complaint. A decorated Vietnam veteran, Smith promptly retired. Moral: Don't make passes at lady generals who wear glasses.

Yep, I'm Gay Award



WHILE MOST CELEBRITIES fight to preserve a modicum of privacy, Ellen DeGeneres had the courage to come out of the closet on her TV sitcom and in a *Time* cover story. But the comedienne's battle against prejudice didn't end there. She threatened to walk when narrow-minded ABC execs slapped an "adult content" label on a subsequent episode in which Ellen and a female co-star kissed. One reason she'd gone public with her sexual orientation, Ellen explained, was to help homosexual teens struggling with identity. The unsinkable Ellen asked,

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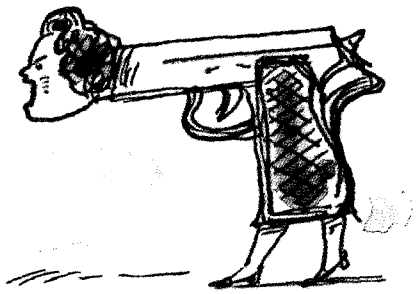
"Where will it stop?" Presumably with the Nielsen ratings, which ended the show shortly afterwards.

Just a "Housewife" Award

PROVING THAT AN ordinary soccer mom can take on the all-powerful gun lobby, Donna Dees-Thomases, a self-described housewife, became the driving force behind last spring's Million Mom March, an antigun protest in Washington. Bobbsey Twins Hillary and Tipper attended. The courageous New Jersey mom frankly admits that she has "never been politically active" —although, presumably, she *has* shaken the hands of a few bigwigs through sister-in-law and Hillary confidante Susan Thomases, and in her own capacity as spokesman for the *Late Show with David Letterman*, and before that, assistant press secretary to two Democratic senators.

Courage under Fire Award



GUNS SEEM TO BRING OUT the courage in all sorts of moms. Another participant in the Million Mom March was rotund talk show hostess Rosie O'Donnell. Previously, she had ambushed NRA poster boy Tom Selleck when he appeared on her show. When it was subsequently learned that Rosie's own bodyguard had applied for a permit to carry a concealed weapon, Rosie explained—between mouthfuls of Drakes Cakes—that she did not "personally" own a gun. Her spokesman helpfully added that the gun was for protection, not homicide.

Susan Sarandon Golden Hacksaw Award

STANLEY "TOOKIE" WILLIAMS says his life has "changed totally" since he entered San Quentin. A founder of Los Angeles' notorious Crips gang, Tookie joined with journalist Barbara Becnel to produce several books designed to teach kids about the evils of gangs. Tookie's newest book, *Life in Prison*, has received kudos from the American Library Association. When Tookie, who has entertained Winnie Mandela and other celebrity admirers, was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, Becnel described her protégé as "wide-eyed like a child and really excited." Unable to see how much Tookie has "grown," prosecutors snipe that articles about him often fail to mention that he murdered four people, allegedly schemed to kill a prison guard, and appears to be in firm control of the Blue Note Crips, the L.A. gang's San Quentin arm.

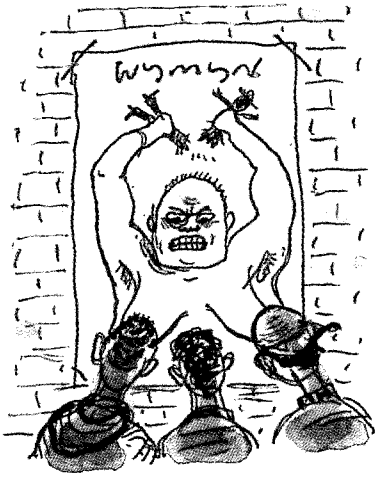
June Allyson Award

MANY OLDER PEOPLE can't admit it when their powers begin to fail. Therefore, a special, *loud* round of applause for the Boca Raton seniors, who had the courage to tell the world that, while still able to play five bingo cards at once, they no longer had the marbles to punch a butterfly ballot for Al Gore.

Public Enema #1 Award

TODAY STAR KATIE COURIC probed another outmoded societal barrier when she broadcast her own colonoscopy on national television. NBC's bubbly proctology preacher, who chugged a laxative cocktail before the eyes of millions, is promoting early detection of colon cancer. Thank heaven for fiber optic colonscopes! Still, once you've seen one colon, you've seen them all.

Larry Flynt Academic Freedom Award



A STUDENT ORGANIZATION at Penn State, known as Womyns Concerns, has stayed the course, providing meaningful cultural and educational exchanges on campus, despite an ugly outbreak of bigotry: Campus police pulled down posters advertising their evening of readings and performance art, popularly known as C - - tfest. No sooner had the chastened cops been forced to put back the signs than a mean-spirited Young Republican called the festival "an inappropriate expenditure of state tax dollars." Undaunted, Womyns Concerns leader Michelle Yates responded that anyone who took the trouble actually to attend C - - tfest would realize it was educational in nature, dealing with sexual assault and domestic violence and other Lifetime Television topics. The highlight was author Inga Musico, who read from her acclaimed *C - - t : A Declaration of Independence.*

~ The Staff of TWQ

We welcome nominations from readers for future winners of our False Courage Awards.

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Hollywood Courage

Joseph Epstein on how to get a standing ovation

COURAGE is nine-tenths context. What is courageous in one setting can be foolhardy in another and even cowardly in a third.

I had an early insight into this several years ago when my friend Edward Shils gave one of his Jefferson Lectures at the University of Chicago. At the heart of his lecture was a frontal attack on the universities for accepting federal money while naively thinking that no strings—not to mention ropes, thick cables, foolproof stainless steel handcuffs—would come along with it.

After the lecture, I happened to be standing near the podium, when a woman came up to congratulate him on his "intellectual courage" in saying what he did. "Intellectual courage!" Edward exclaimed, genuinely surprised. "What I said in that lecture took no intellectual courage. It takes intellectual courage to speak one's mind in the Soviet Union or in South Africa, where they clap you in prison or kill you for your opinions. But doing so here takes no courage whatsoever—only the absence

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of intellectual cowardice, which isn't quite the same as intellectual courage." Quite right, just so, and bang-dang-diddly-on.

The context for artistic and intellectual courage in America is often a bit tricky, because, culturally, the United States is really two cultures, and they distinctly aren't the two cultures of C.P. Snow's imagining in the early 1960s, that of literature and that of science. What we have is Culture No. 1, the liberal-left culture of the humanities and social-science divisions of the universities, the worlds of art and literature and entertainment (less clearly that of classical music and science), and much of the Democratic Party; and then Culture No. 2, which constitutes the more amorphous remainder of the country. They are not divided by money—though no one in Culture No. 1 figures to be very hard-pressed financially—but by belief. What takes courage to say in Culture No. 2 often passes for the utterly commonplace in Culture No. 1, or visa versa.

When Dan Quayle, then-vice president of the United States, made his infamous Murphy Brown speech, in which he said he thought, on balance, having a child out of wedlock was not such a hot idea, he was everywhere excoriated by Culture No. 1, while Culture No. 2, perhaps sensing he was right, was a little nervous about openly coming out on his side: I mean, the guy couldn't spell potato, right? A few years after this incident, now out of office, Quayle, in recounting it to a small group of which I happened to be a member, said that one of the notable curiosities of his Murphy Brown speech was that he heard from a fairly large number of people working in movies and television who told him they thought he was absolutely right, though they hoped he would understand they were talking off the record and he was not to mention their names. Quayle was, he said, astonished at the deep conformity implicit in their fear. "I mean," he said, "they were terrified."

Imagine a Rob Reiner, an Alec Baldwin, a Susan Sarandon saying that having babies out of wedlock may not have been such a good thing for the children, or adding that they certainly wouldn't want their daughters put in so vulnerable a position. I ask you to imagine it because, having tried, I can't.

A few months ago I was on an FM radio show with an arts foundation executive and the composer of the operas *Amistad* and *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X*. The composer was openly delighted at what he thought his sly courage in slipping in such radical material about race into the opera repertoire. I was rude enough to suggest that I didn't understand where courage came into it and that it all sounded to me a sure thing, big box office, which in fact it turned out to be. The wound opened, salt shaker raised, I added that I thought what would take courage would be to compose an opera about a married man with young children who is about to begin a love affair with a woman twenty years younger than he, but then at the last moment, before taking the plunge, decides to return to his wife. "Now there," I announced, "is what I would call radical opera."

Whenever Hollywood takes on what it thinks is a radically courageous subject, be sure that it is in reality only an occasion for a warm bath of self-congratulation, usually in already used, morally tepid water. I took a pass on *The Cider House Rules*, one such movie, because I don't go to movies about abortion, a subject and issue that seems to bring out the sanctimonious virtucrat in everyone. I'm told that the movie makes the claim that abortion is O.K., and maybe better than O.K., a damn fine thing. This is a proposition so utterly accepted by Culture No. 1 that it would require a social Geiger counter so fine not even Hammacher Schlemmer sells it to discover anyone in Hollywood who disagreed with it.

I did see *American Beauty*, another Hollywood adventure in bogus courageous moviemaking, which presented another opportunity for one of those slightly skuzzy baths just referred to. I'm a bit uncertain myself wherein the courage of this movie derives. From showing a chap wanking in the shower—through isenglass, to be sure, and from behind? From portraying two gay men as sweethearts, in every sense of the term? From showing suburban American family life as one inexorable nightmare? From mocking ambition? From suggesting that all violent emotion is really an expression of repressed homosexuality? From suggesting that adolescents are so much wiser than their parents? From all of this and a few further bits of received wisdom that I've probably overlooked.

All this, surely, is the stuff out of which standing ovations on Oscar night are made. Had I been in the Oscar-night audience when *American Beauty* won all its awards, I would have sat that standing ovation out, muttering to myself that—harummph, harummph—the only brave people in Hollywood are its stuntmen. ◆

Essayist Joseph Epstein, former editor of the American Scholar, *teaches literature at Northwestern and is a contributing editor at the* Weekly Standard.

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TWQ Interview

Fact, Fiction, and Feel-good History

Professor *Mary Lefkowitz* talks with Charlotte Hays

Was Socrates black? Was Cleopatra an Egyptian nationalist? Was wandering-poet Homer educated in Egypt? Afrocentrists say yes. Wellesley professor Mary Lefkowitz, author of Not Out of Africa, *says this is myth.* TWQ *editor Charlotte Hays recently spoke with Professor Lefkowitz about the perils of treating myth as history.*

TWQ: Who started the trend of interpreting ancient history and literature from an Afro-centric perspective and why did it start?

LEFKOWITZ: I'm not sure that it can be traced to any one individual, but it goes back to the nineteenth century when people of African descent yearned for African roots. They had been brought here as slaves cut off from their roots. Those who came from the same part of Africa were kept apart and couldn't communicate with one another. There was a longing for a generalized African culture, which, of course, never existed any more than a generalized European culture or European language. Egypt became the focus of this because Egypt was the oldest civilization and had a marvelous, monumental legacy.

TWQ: Could you tell me about this as a movement in modern academia, where dubious books such as Martin Bernal's Black Athena *are assigned reading?*

LEFKOWITZ: The modern movement in academia takes up from these old ideas and develops them further but in a couple of directions. One is that a conspiracy theory has been added: The truth has been kept from people of African descent by whites and Europeans who were jealous of it, essentially, and wanted the history of civilization to be theirs and theirs alone. And this fits in very nicely with the kind of paranoid politics that are so popular in this country. A book that was very influential for many people is a book called *Stolen Legacy*, which was written by a man who died before he finished the manuscript named George G. M. James. The book was completed by Yosef A. ben-Jochannan, a pupil of James' at a small college in Arkansas. It wasn't really in universities until relatively recently. But, it has been out there since the middle of this past twentieth century. And many, many people read it, and it seemed to fit their idea of the way they had been treated by American society. And so a lot of people who come into university teaching had read the book, had grown up on it, and some of them realized that it was based on false assumptions. Others didn't want to believe that.

TWQ: What about the idea that Europeans "stole" the African legacy? Can you steal another culture?

LEFKOWITZ: You can't steal a culture in the way you can steal a piano or a car. This is one of the most basically wrong assumptions in the book. If I steal your car, you don't have it, but if I steal your culture, you still have your

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culture. The perfect example of that is Greece and Rome. The Romans adopted Greek culture. They thought it was better than their culture, and they simply adopted it and did their own thing with it. But, meanwhile, the Greeks still had their culture.

TWQ: Does Stolen Legacy *imply that somehow this alleged appropriation impoverished African culture?*

LEFKOWITZ: Yes. I think it's implied that the Greeks took it and ran with it and that African culture as a result never got the credit it deserved. There's another false assumption operating with the notion of the stolen legacy, and that is the whole picture of Egypt, which comes not from scientific Egyptology, which dates from about the 1830s, but from mystical Egyptology, which was widely popular before then. This concept is based on a misunderstanding of Egypt that was developed in the eighteenth century. There is a notion of Egyptian mysteries, which are basically Greco-Roman in nature. This is based on Freemasonry, as I say in my book, and Freemasonry is essentially a European notion of Egypt. That's the notion of Egypt that's in *Stolen Legacy*. The great irony is that in saying this is African culture, they're really presenting European culture.

TWQ: What is Egyptian mystery religion?

LEFKOWITZ: Egyptian mystery religion is basically Greco-Roman mysteries, a series of initiation rites. A mystery means initiation.

So, it's an initiation where you go through a series of tasks or a series of revelations in order to become a member of an elite group. And that's something that the Greeks and Romans did. The example that people know best is the Eleusinian Mysteries.

TWQ: The ancient Greek historian Herodotus seemed to think that the Greeks had borrowed some religious practices from the Egyptians. Did the father of history get it wrong?

LEFKOWITZ: Well, he got it wrong to a great degree. And this is not just my saying so. Egyptologists say so as well. He got a great deal right, but he also got a great deal wrong. The reason he got it wrong was that, when he traveled in Egypt, he was relying on people who knew Greek to tell him things and he made assumptions that simply weren't there. For example, he says that the names of all the Greek gods come from Egypt. And a famous Egyptologist, Jan Assmann, who is German, has just written a book saying they must have been telling him the names of the Egyptian gods in Greek.

And, therefore, he thought they were the same because they were interpreting it for him. There had been Greeks living in Egypt and a number of Egyptians knew Greek and that's probably how it all came about. But the father of history did a remarkably good job considering that nothing like this had been done before. What he didn't see—what he heard from others—is more suspicious.

TWQ: Author John Hendrick Clarke, whom you quote in the book, wrote in his book, Black Women in Antiquity, *that Cleopatra was "a shrewd politician and Egyptian nationalist. She committed suicide when she lost control of Egypt." Is that an accurate portrayal of Cleopatra?*

LEFKOWITZ: She wasn't a nationalist in the sense that I think one would mean today. And she wasn't an Egyptian. She came from a line of Macedonian Greek rulers, and there's a remote possibility, which I discuss in my book, that her paternal grandmother may have been something other than a Greek. I don't think it's very likely. But basically Cleopatra's first language was Greek and her culture was Greek, though she was the first of her line to learn Egyptian. She wanted to keep her empire. She was the richest and most powerful ruler in the world, but she needed the Roman army to protect her. She bet on the wrong horse, Mark Antony, whose forces were defeated at Actium. She committed suicide because she did not wish to be led through the streets of Rome in the celebration of Octavian's triumph over Egypt.

TWQ: What about facts? Don't facts intrude on these Afro-centric interpretations?

LEFKOWITZ: Well, yes. The facts intrude a great deal on these interpretations, and this is what I've tried to show. In my estimation, the whole discussion of history should be about facts and how facts are used as evidence. I've been accused of racism simply because I've mentioned facts and evidence. The race card is a smoke screen—a way of keeping one away from the truth. The sophisticated version of myth taught as history is to use postmodern theory and to claim that all knowledge is only the opinion of a particular group. I don't believe that, because I think there is such a thing as truth.

TWQ: What is wrong with teaching history that may be factually wrong but makes people feel better about themselves and their heritage?

LEFKOWITZ: A number of my colleagues have made this argument. I can't tell you the number of non-African-American academics who have been angry at me for pointing out that Afro-centrism is fiction. It shouldn't be taught as history just because it gives people a feeling that they have a wonderful heritage. There are many important things about Africa that people don't know and should know.

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There is reason to think of Egypt as an African civilization and to look at that as one of the many important things that have been done in Africa. But that can be accomplished by sticking to historical facts. However, if you teach people myth instead of history, eventually they're going to find out that this is not exactly what happened. It also exposes those people to ridicule. If I come in and say, well, George Washington chopped down the cherry tree and I firmly believe this, people will think I'm really quite foolish.

TWQ: Are there any other dangers to teaching myth as history?

LEFKOWITZ: I think there are a lot of dangers. There are some very disturbing similarities between this sort of teaching of blood history, what I'd call tribal history, and the Third Reich. It's a kind of history in which your group is felt to be predominant and, most important, the reason it's dominant is not virtue but race. They said in the Third Reich that the Germans were the master race and the will of the *Volk* was really the most important thing. It was on that basis that the Holocaust happened.

TWQ: What's been the response on campus to your book? Have you been able to have good debates with Afro-centrists?

LEFKOWITZ: No, I haven't had any debates with my colleagues that have been productive at all. The few debates that have taken place have not been about the issues—not about the evidence, but simply about racial pride and prejudice in this country. I have no objection at all to talking about racism and the problems of racism. Goodness knows, I certainly hate racism, but racism has nothing to do with this. And, as I say, invoking racism is throwing up a smoke screen—talking about how my work is racist because it doesn't praise black people.

TWQ: Is all of this impinging upon academic freedom?

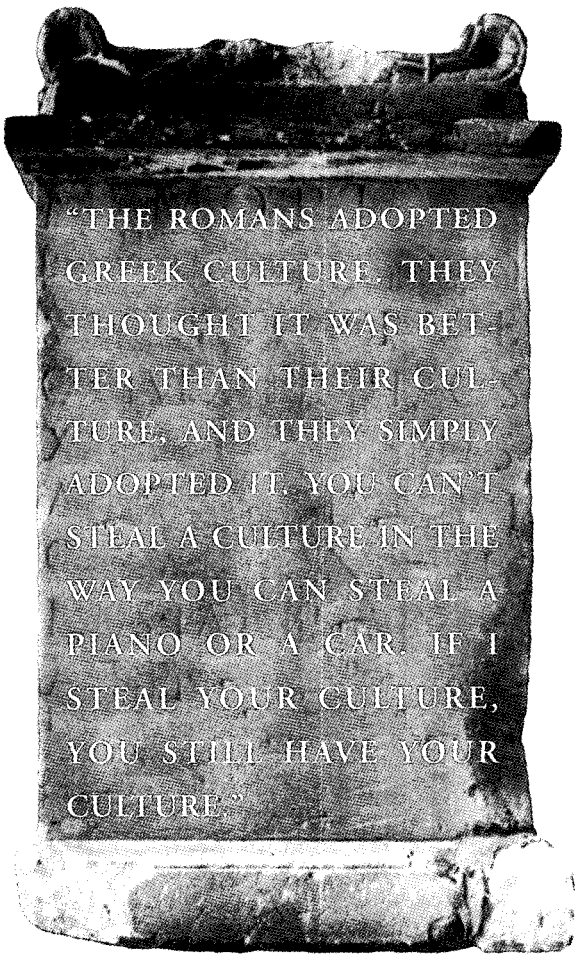
LEFKOWITZ: I don't think it has impinged on mine though a certain amount of pressure was brought on me by one of our former deans. But should we not talk about this because it upsets black students? Well, unfortunately, the truth does upset people from time to time. The truth about colonialism is upsetting to many people of European descent. But that certainly shouldn't stop us from talking about it. Now, academic freedom should also protect those who teach extreme Afro-centric stuff. And I defend that because I think that if you take away one person's academic freedom, you're going to take away the next person's also.

TWQ: Some Afro-centrists teach things that demonstrably aren't true. What's the difference between academic freedom and freedom of speech?

LEFKOWITZ: It's a very difficult thing to really get a handle on. But, if the university is supposed to be a place where you are advancing knowledge, you don't advance knowledge by teaching that there was no Holocaust. You're teaching your students to ignore evidence and to distort facts. I feel similarly about the notion of a stolen legacy, that it isn't doing the students who study this any good. And, therefore, while one is free to say in open society any kind of nonsense one wants, when one says it in the university, one is doing an awful lot of damage and that ought to be recognized.

What do you do about it? That's the hard question. Do you have a board of people who decide whether a thing is good or bad? I think that that's a possibility, but it's very difficult because the board could be stacked one way or the other. And you get into all sorts of litigation problems, so it may be really better just to let it work out in the normal course of discussion because the truth usually emerges in an open society. And I think it really has in this case over a period of time. People like Leonard Jeffries [who taught Afro-centric theories of antiquity at New York University] and Molefi Kete Asante [author of *Kemet, Afrocentricity, and Knowledge*] are discredited by most of the public, though they still have some admirers and hangers-on.

But the academic freedom that protects them is the same academic freedom that protects me. ◆


"THE ROMANS ADOPTED GREEK CULTURE. THEY THOUGHT IT WAS BETTER THAN THEIR CULTURE, AND THEY SIMPLY ADOPTED IT. YOU CAN'T STEAL A CULTURE IN THE WAY YOU CAN STEAL A PIANO OR A CAR. IF I STEAL YOUR CULTURE, YOU STILL HAVE YOUR CULTURE."

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The Token Man

Confessions of a Duffer: *Byron York* admits golf magazines are a lot like women's magazines

"Never Embarrass Yourself Again!" Would you buy a magazine that made such a promise on its cover? I would. In this case, it was the cover of one of my favorites, *Golf Digest*, and the piece promised a dozen "surefire tips" to save me from "flubbing, skulling, shanking, and whiffing"—all colorfully named golf gaffes that are indeed terribly embarrassing when done in front of one's playing partners.

Golf Digest and its leading competitor, *Golf Magazine*, are full of helpful things like that. In recent months, I have pored over articles with titles like "Find Your Hidden Power!" and "What YOU Should Be Doing NOW!" and "Improve Your Grip, Posture, and Alignment, and LOWER YOUR SCORES NOW!" I've also read "Eat Right—Save Shots!" and "Five Exercises You Can Do at Work!" and—my personal favorite—"Yoga, Pilates, & Golf!"

I've kept up with the latest equipment and clothes in stories like "Which Ball for You?" and "Look Sharp and Stay Comfortable This Fall" and "It's Gotta Be the Shoes...Tiger's Shoes!" And I've read about faraway golf destinations in "New Day in the Auld Toon," which made me yearn to walk the fairways of St. Andrews, and "Desert Inn: Oasis of Civility on the Vegas Strip." And, of course, I keep up with the yearly list of "Spectacular Spas!"

Self-help. Health and fashion. Travel. Does any of this sound familiar? It doesn't take a visiting professor of gender studies to figure out that I am addicted to women's magazines. Only they're about golf.

Why else would I read an article entitled "Ego Mistakes: Is Your Machismo Getting in the Way?" In it, Dr. Richard Coop, a prominent practitioner of the growing field of golf psychology, seeks to soothe the anger I feel when my tee shot curves wildly into the woods. "No one can reproduce their best shots on command, and yet many golfers seriously expect to," Coop explains.

"That's the ego flexing its muscle." His prescription: Relax. Get out of that machismo thing.

Golfers take this stuff very, very seriously. A recent book about the late U.S. Open champion Payne Stewart describes how Dr. Coop once prescribed Ritalin to keep the notoriously hyper Stewart from getting too jazzed up on the course. It didn't work. Stewart also tried sticking tiny acupuncture needles in his ear, which he would rub at moments of great stress in the belief that the needles' motion released a natural tranquilizer into his bloodstream. That didn't work, either. Later, he turned to religion and joined a 10,000-member church in Orlando.

No doubt he read *Golf Digest*, too. But the magazine is about much more than helping yourself become a better golfer. The flip side of all the Coop-style reassurance, as it is in many women's magazines, is a blatant appeal to reader anxieties. For example, a staple of all golf publications is the hit-the-ball-farther story. It's something everyone wants to do—even the weekend hacker occasionally imagines himself booming a drive down the fairway like Tiger Woods. To be unable to do so is somehow...unmanly.

So the magazines ask questions like: How long are you? They tell stories of big hitters like Golfer A or Golfer B, who are described as "huge" off the tee. And they say they can make us bigger, too. It's a good thing readers like me are very secure about issues like that.

One of my fellow golf magazine devotees is Bill Clinton. As his days in office dwindled, the outgoing president granted one of his many "exit interviews" to *Golf Digest*. Conducted by *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman, an avid golfer himself, the piece allowed Clinton to reveal his philosophical side. "Golf is a lot like life in a lot of ways," he told Friedman. "All the biggest wounds are self-inflicted. And you get a lot of breaks you don't deserve—both ways. So it's important not to get too upset when you're having a bad day." Sounds like he was listening to Dr. Coop as much as his lawyers during all that unpleasantness in 1998.

But that's about as close to politics as the golf rags get. They're much more likely to devote a cover, as *Golf Magazine* did, to "It's Y2K...Time to Make THE FIVE MODERN MOVES!" Why do I keep reading? Why do the readers of *Elle* and *Redbook* and *Cosmopolitan* and *Vogue* keep reading? It's a tough world out there, sister, and we need all the help we can get.

Byron York is White House correspondent for National Review.

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JOCK ENVY

David Shiflett predicts that, in our lifetimes, there will never be a female linebacker in the NFL

It is a given these days that the modern male feels threatened by females, who have formed a great phalanx of sisterhood to drive men from their privileged thrones. Hillary Clinton, to name a prominent example, is said to be a threat to men because she is an "aggressive" female lawyer and policy hawk. Women who earn more than their husbands are said to be a threat to their spouses' pride and mental equilibrium. Women who are sexually aggressive allegedly spook their male prey. And now, women in sports are said to be a threat to that male domain.

No doubt, there are some men who feel threatened by women, though probably not many. Find a man who is upset that his wife out-earns him and I'll find you 10,000 others who wish their wives made enough to allow them to stay at home to nurse the Scotch bottle. Sexually aggressive women seldom have a hard time finding a date, and when word gets out a long line of fellows is likely to appear at her door. As for Hillary—it wasn't her aggressiveness that was the problem. She's simply a self-righteous nag who reminds a lot of guys of the old bat who ran study hall.

Which leaves us with sports. Because sportswriters and broadcasters are among the most politically correct hacks in the media bidness, the straight-talk express seldom stops at the stadium. So let the truth be stated here: The simple and undeniable fact of the matter is that so far as women jocks go, the pouch is empty (relatively speaking, of course). Women athletes are marvels to behold, and not only when playing beach volleyball. But women can't compete, mano-a-chicko, in the big leagues, including basketball, ice hockey, soccer, football, tennis, baseball (though some exceptions may apply, such as the catcher position) as well as discus- throwing, log-splitting, shot-putting, wrestling, boxing, weightlifting, and in most NASCAR events. Pretending otherwise is not only an affront to reality, but causes problems in the real world.

Consider the case of Heather Mercer. Heather believed she was a good football place-kicker. She played high school ball and could kick PATs—the nine-iron shot of football—though her field goal range was only about 35 yards.

But Heather had her dreams, which included a vision of winning a spot as place kicker for Duke University's Blue Devils. This was not so grandiose a hope, for Duke is certainly no Ohio State. In addition, Heather did have enough gumption to try out as a walk-on kicker, and successfully sailed a ball through the goalposts from 28 yards during an intra-squad game. The coach was so impressed—and perhaps inspired by the obvious political benefits of having a chick on the team—that he put her on the practice squad. But he later reversed himself and dumped her. As he explained, he had guys who could kick 55-yard field goals. "She can't kick the ball half as far as six other kickers. What am I supposed to do? What am I supposed to do?"

For starters, get yourself a lawyer. Heather turned out to be yet another apostle of a prevailing philosophy: Those who can, do—those who cannot, sue. She charged that Duke had violated her rights. She had been cut, she argued, because she was a woman. Her psyche had also been sacked by sexist mutterings from the coach—something about beauty pageants. The jury agreed—and, as one female juror later admitted, also figured Duke was rich and "needed to be punished." Heather got a cool $2 million (one jury member apparently wanted to make it $5 million), which she says will be used for a program to support other female place-kickers.

It is at this point that men enter into their backlash mode. Not because they are truly threatened, which of course is ridiculous. The backlash is directed at the people who lead the Heathers of

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the world to believe that they have the stuff to play with the boys, even the boys who play for Duke. When the Heathers fail, as they inevitably will, they raise a stink, and that diminishes sports, and sports is what guys do on weekend afternoons when they're not bending beneath their wives' and/or girlfriends' lashes.

There is no question that Heather didn't have the stuff. Her famous and fabled 28-yard field goal in the intrasquad game, as it turned out, had been helped along by the fact that the defense did not rush her as she kicked. Her qualifying kick, in other words, was a free throw. Nor was she the only walk-on player to be cut. She was one of six. She was, however, the only female, and the only one who got $2 million for her troubles. So, despite what you hear, there is plenty of money to be made in the bush leagues.

This isn't to discount female athletes. Of course there should be teams for women, although the destructive nature of Title IX has seen to it that this sometimes comes at the cost of men's sports.

But there will not be, at least in our lifetimes, a woman who can play middle linebacker in the NFL. Women cannot beat the top men in tennis, or basketball, or any other major sport. This is not because girls were not encouraged to trot to the sandlot along with their kid brothers, or because coaches think they will do better in a beauty pageant than the pro draft. It is all a gift of the grandest gal of all—Mother Nature—who, for reasons of her own, decreed that women will not be as physically powerful as men.

We should always respect differences, especially when they represent what might be called the Hand Grenade Syndrome. Women can pick 'em up and pull the pins, but when they toss the pineapples, bystanders are advised to make tracks.

Unfortunately, Heather's $2 million settlement will probably inspire and maintain many empty dreams, to be followed by a similarly large number of lawsuits. All because she believes in a fundamentalist view of equality—that is, men and women are, or at least should be, equal in all things. In a teary interview with *Sports Illustrated* (whose reporter was no doubt weeping in unison) Heather said, "I had always believed that quote from Eleanor Roosevelt: 'Nobody can make you feel inferior without your permission.'" This poor girl needs deprogramming. The sports arena has no patience with such ideological oozing, just as it has no patience even with nepotism. If an athlete can swim in the current, the athlete has a chance to prevail. Otherwise, he drowns. Or, as the fat guy at home plate would put it, "Baby, yer out!"◆

David Shiflett is a writer living in Midlothian, Virginia.

SIDELINED!

By Kimberly Schuld

For girls who want to play ball with boys, Heather Mercer, winner of a hefty $2 million verdict from Duke University, after being cut from the football team during practice, shouldn't be a heroine.

The ruling in the Mercer case sent a loud and clear message to coaches: Don't even let girls in the door. If Duke's hapless football coach hadn't let Heather, an aspiring place kicker, participate in football practice, which made her think she'd made the team, the university would be $2 million richer.

Mercer sued Duke under Title IX, the 1972 law that prohibits sex discrimination in educational and athletic programs. The rule is that, whenever there is no women's team available, women may try out for the boys' team, except in the case of contact sports.

Duke would have been in the clear if the coach had told Mercer she couldn't try out because football is a contact sport. In the case of contact sports, the National Collegiate Athletic Association leaves the decision as to whether women can, in fact, try out up to the coach's discretion.

If the coach had told Heather she couldn't play, that would have been well within his rights. Instead, he allowed her to try out for the team. Though Mercer may have been able to kick a good field goal in a non-competitive situation, she was not up to the demands of college football. The coach let her go.

Mercer sued. A federal district court judge invoked the contact sports clause and dismissed the case. Mercer's lawyers appealed to the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, and it ruled that Duke had forfeited its protection when it let Mercer try out for the team. In other words, once you let a woman into practice, you'd better put her on the team. If she gets cut, she might slap a costly sexual discrimination suit on you.

Mercer has said that she'll use her money from the case to set up scholarships for other female place kickers—but thanks to Mercer, there may not be many in college athletics.

Mercer may have sidelined them permanently, by showing coaches what it can cost, if they so much as give women athletes a chance in the rough and tumble of contact sports.◆

Kimberly Schuld is director of policy and liaison for the Independent Women's Forum.

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NOW— So Very THEN

Who is this Rippa van Winkle? *Kathryn Jean Lopez* introduces us to the frontrunner for the presidency of NOW

LATER THIS YEAR Patricia Ireland, president of the National Organization for Women (NOW) since its twenty-fifth anniversary in 1992, will hand over the reins of power to another. Most likely to her executive vice president, Kim Gandy, a NOW veteran who has been active in the cause on a state, local, or national level since 1973.

A Louisiana native, Gandy graduated with a B.S. in math from Louisiana Tech and went on to become a statistical analyst at South Central Bell. Spurred on by her activity on behalf of feminist causes, Gandy entered New Orleans' Loyola University Law School, where she made law review and moot court, going on to serve as a senior assistant district attorney in New Orleans. In private practice, Gandy specialized in domestic violence, racial discrimination, child support, marital property, and lesbian-mother custody cases.

Gandy might be the front-runner to become president of NOW, but her worldview—and that of her NOW sisters—is positively then. It's as if they've slept through the last few decades, as if they haven't seen what the effects dependency on government have done to women.

NOW remains adamantly against welfare reform in *any* form. Patricia Ireland remarked four years ago, "Passage of any of the welfare dismantling proposals currently before Congress could mean a death sentence for tens of thousands of women and children who have survived domestic violence."

As muckraking psychiatrist Sally Satel noted in these pages ("The Abuse Excuse," *TWQ* 14), Gandy lobbied in particular against work requirements for women victims of domestic violence: "Work would be like making her stand on a trap door." NOW has long argued that cuts in federal public assistance lead to more violence against women. That's right, never let them free from the government.

One of Gandy's shining moments was the impeachment of Bill Clinton. On December 16, 1998, Gandy was among the band of twenty women who marched unannounced into the office of then-incoming Speaker of the House Bob Livingston. (Others included Eleanor Smeal of the Feminist Majority, Betty Friedan, and Rep. Maxine Waters.) Their purpose: to demand that the witch hunt end.

"Every woman in this country needs to call her representative to stop this three-ring circus going in the House," Gandy implored. In a statement, Gandy changed the subject from a president who lied to a nation, obstructed justice, and very publicly humiliated

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his wife: "In fact, the conservative majority in Congress, with their relentless attacks on women's rights, is a far greater threat to women and our families."

NOW and Gandy, following their cheerleading during impeachment, were firmly in the Democratic camp this fall. Kim Gandy was among leaders who enthusiastically coached the Alpha male Gore. After a two-hour session with the former vice president at the Old Executive Office Building last spring, Gandy met the press and said, "There is no question in the minds of all these huge women's organizations that a Bush presidency would be a disaster for women." The session, she said, was an opportunity for them to say to Gore, "Let us help you reach the women of this country."

And that they did.

"When it comes to the issues that affect women's lives," she said on CNN this fall, "Vice President Gore has it all over Governor Bush."

And like her candidate Al Gore, Kim Gandy was fond of scare tactics during her on-air time flacking for her man. On CNN she asked, "Why are elderly people eating dog food? Because our Social Security system doesn't take into account all the years of unpaid caregiving that they contributed to society."

On Geraldo Rivera's CNBC show, Gandy called Bush "a dangerous person to the women of this country." And, of course, one of those dangers is his admiration for...two Supreme Court justices, Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas.

Abortion remains NOW's primary litmus test of whether you can call yourself a feminist. Said Gandy, "To say you're a feminist and to say you're anti-choice is definitely a contradiction. They focus all their attention on this little bit of tissue in the womb, and ignore all the tissue surrounding it."

Gandy has been the legal voice for NOW, leading PR and legal battles to restrict the protests outside abortion clinics, encouraging sexual-harassment laws in schools, and arguing that single-sex education (for boys or girls) is illegal in public schools. Gandy has said, "We tried separate-but-equal a long time ago and it didn't work."

Kim Gandy is just about everything a feminist wants in a woman—right down to her children. Her kids, two beautiful girls —Elizabeth Cady Lornell and Katherine Eleanor Gandy—are living monuments to her ideology. Elizabeth was named after Elizabeth Cady Stanton, suffragette, and Katherine was named after Katherine Austin, a former NOW board member, Eleanor Smeal, former NOW president, and Eleanor Roosevelt, former First Lady. She also has a husband in a politically correct line of work—Christopher "Kip" Lornell, a part-time professor of Africana Studies at George Washington University, and an ethnomusicologist.

And, she's still excited about the ERA. Yes, in 1999—not the seventies or even early eighties—Gandy told a reporter from the American Bar Association's *Journal*, "We need a guarantee of equality now more than ever."

A minor difference NOW would face in a Gandy administration is one of style: Gandy's openness about her family life. Ireland is famously vague on the details of her personal life. *The Advocate*, the gay and lesbian magazine, outed her in a cover story at the beginning of her term as NOW president, with the cover line, "America's Most Powerful Woman Comes Out." Her response? "What I have described is who is in my family, not my sexuality. There is great diversity in our families today; it's not Mom and Dad and Spot and Fluff anymore." (Ireland obviously had not been introduced to President Bush, who does have a dog named Spot.)

As for Gandy, she doesn't seem to be a big fan of the institution of marriage. One of her most quoted remarks by conservative-types is from her debates on the "Fathers Count Act," aimed at funneling money to non-profits to encourage low-income men to marry their pregnant partners and learn parenting skills. Gandy said, "I think promoting marriage as a goal in and of itself is misguided." This wasn't the first and last time she dismissed the institution. Gandy is a leading foe of covenant marriages, which she says are "wrong" for giving "people the idea that somehow they don't really care about each other unless they're willing to give up a whole set of legal protections down the line."

In fact, in addressing the marriage movement and specifically a statement this summer affirming the general advantages of marriage signed by, among others, Mary Pipher, author of *Reviving Ophelia*—no right-wing conspirator, Gandy warned, "The marriage movement is giving women the message that a bad husband and father is better than none at all. Single moms are being demonized. NOW is committed to exposing and organizing against this deliberate return to the days of unchallenged male control."

When it comes down to the bottom line—will NOW broaden its appeal to more of the nation's women under a President Gandy?—if her record is any indication, the answer is a certain No. Expect NOW to remain very then. ◆

Kathryn Jean Lopez is an associate editor at National Review.

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Crazy or Lazy? Inside the Disability World

You don't have to be injured or sick to collect federal disability payments. *Heather Mac Donald* shows how generous disability payments are crippling the system—and the recipients

As a new decade gets underway, the public may well discover that the great welfare reform debate of 1995 addressed only half the problem. The Rivera family of Boston illustrates why. Eulalia Rivera came from Puerto Rico in 1968 and proceeded to raise a welfare dynasty. Her sixteen surviving children (the seventeenth was shot) and her eighty-nine progeny collect $750,000 to $1 million a year in government benefits. Their main form of support, however, is not AFDC, the program for single mothers and children that was targeted for reform: It is federal disability payments.

Not that the Riveras suffer from crippling physical handicaps. Most of the family's disabled members collect benefits for their "nerves." As Eulalia's son Juan, a divorced father of five, told the *Boston Globe*: "I have a nervous condition. There is no way I could work." He pointed to his hands, which were shaking. "Look at this," he said. "I'm having an attack right now."

The Riveras represent the future of public assistance. Because of people like them there have been an explosive growth and shift in function of the disability program. Disability increasingly supports people whose main problem is not a traditional medical impairment but a host of social handicaps that no doctor could cure. Many of these new-

 Drawing by Yuri Kolyadenko

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er beneficiaries may, indeed, be unemployable, but this status reflects drug use, lack of education and skills, or the absence of a work ethic rather than physical impairment.

Behind the shift lies a revolution in the concept of disability, the crowning achievement of fifteen years of litigation by welfare- and disability-rights advocates. American culture now defines as "mental disorders" behavior that other parts of the world might consider simply antisocial or even criminal. This policy is turning disability into a general welfare system for all the poor—even including children with behavioral problems, for whom the designation "disabled" becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, likely to marginalize them for life.

Running a welfare program under the guise of a disability program is extremely costly. More important, putting people on the dole for life does nothing to alleviate the social conditions that made them unemployable in the first place.

The federal disability program began modestly in 1956 to support workers over fifty whose severe disability was expected to last indefinitely, preventing them from ever returning to work. Its history since then has been one of almost unbroken expansion.

Currently, the Social Security Administration (SSA) administers two disability programs: the original Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)—now for workers of any age who've paid into the Social Security trust fund and whose disability is expected to last a year or more—and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for the non-working, disabled poor. Unlike SSDI, eligibility for SSI (which also covers the elderly and blind) requires no work history. Like AFDC and other welfare programs, it is means-tested to make sure that the recipient's income and resources are below a certain level.

Disability is a ticket to an array of government benefits. In addition to SSI itself, almost all recipients can receive food stamps; most are automatically eligible for Medicaid. SSI also entitles the recipient to subsidized housing, low-income energy assistance, school lunches, and payments from the federal Women, Infants, and Children program.

The disability explosion results from a chain of reactions launched in the seventies. That decade saw the first major surge in disability applications, fueled by liberalized eligibility standards, a declining work ethic, and rising unemployment. The application and award rates for SSDI reached record levels.

But the burden on the SSA from the jump in SSDI applications paled by comparison with the massive short circuit caused by SSI. Even today, the start of SSI in 1974 is remembered within the agency as an unmitigated disaster. Caring for the disabled poor had traditionally been the responsibility of state and local governments. SSI moved that entire responsibility to the federal government, saddling the SSA with three million applications from 1,350 state and local agencies almost overnight. The agency had never had to assess the income, resources, and living arrangements of a transient, often marginal, population.

When the agency ran into the inevitable delays in verifying the new claimants, mobs of angry claimants assaulted and spat upon agency workers; federal marshals or private security officers had to be called in. As Floy Newman, a Social Security operations officer in Santa Ana, California, discreetly explained, welfare recipients "have a different attitude to government" from that of Social Security beneficiaries.

Toward the end of the seventies, exploding benefit costs and the looming insolvency of the SSDI fund prompted the SSA to try to tighten eligibility standards. At the time—and still today—a claimant could be found disabled by one of two routes. A claimant is eligible for benefits under a "medical allowance" if his impairment matches in severity a disability on a list of physical and mental impairments. But, if his impairment is not as severe as those on the list, he can still win benefits under a "vocational allowance," if he shows that his impairment prevents him from performing either his past work or, in light of his age, education, and work experience, any other work generally available.

THERE HAS ALWAYS BEEN tension between the two types of allowance. Critics say that vocational allowances are more subjective than medical allowances. Even more important, the vocational evaluation can serve as a cover for importing social considerations—such as bad or non-existent education, lack of responsibility and work ethic, and self-destructive lifestyle—into the disability determination. For these reasons, the Reagan administration tried to eliminate vocational allowances but was defeated by an army of welfare- and disability-rights activists.

The Reagan administration's eligibility reviews of claims upset recipients' settled beliefs, born of years of lax enforcement, that they were on the rolls for life. In its zeal, the administration cut people who may not have been disabled when they entered the program but had become so after years of dependency on the dole. The press furnished a running account of people turned into the streets or committing suicide.

The courts revolted, and by the end

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of 1984, all the federal circuits had deemed the reviews illegal. Judges put 200,000 people back on the rolls—often without evidence of disability—and authorized more lawsuits that could nullify the rest of the reviews.

The legacy of the 1980-84 review crisis is enormous, for in the legal counterattack the reviews ignited, advocates brought a series of test cases that successfully challenged and enlarged the SSA's eligibility standards. Ultimately, Congress codified virtually all of these victories in the Reform Act of 1984. With eligibility criteria vastly liberalized by the combined judicial and legislative efforts, the gunpowder trail was laid to produce the explosion in the rolls that ineluctably ensued.

NO LEGAL DECISION of the early eighties has more affected the current composition of the rolls than one in a 1982 Minnesota suit challenging the SSA's evaluation of "non-severe" mental impairments. The judge held that the agency had been illegally denying benefits to people who, despite impairments, were able to cope with activities such as cooking and shopping. The court argued that finding such people capable of work ignored the unique stress the work environment poses for the mentally ill. Chronic mental illness, the decision stated, is "characterized by exquisite sensitivity to stress and a decrease in coping skills."

The decision and its subsequent congressional ratification have given rise to a host of agency rulings and court decisions in which work itself is portrayed as toxic to mental and emotional stability—especially owing to its "competitive nature." The Seventh Circuit rebuked the SSA in 1989 for denying disability to a computer operator who had been fired because of his inability to get along with co-workers.

Work itself is portrayed as toxic to mental and emotional stability in a host of court decisions and agency rulings.

Attorneys in disability cases routinely send their clients to a psychiatrist for an evaluation, to make sure that stress, anxiety, or depression is part of almost every complaint. Because the agency is now required to defer to the claimant's treating doctor—even if the claimant has seen him only once—it has little recourse when confronted with a boilerplate diagnosis of personality disorder or identity disturbance.

Many disability claimants belatedly discover mental impairments after claims for physical impairments are denied. An SSDI claimant in Illinois had unsuccessfully appealed the termination of his benefits after the bone fracture for which he had previously received payments healed. On his second appeal, he argued that his epilepsy and alcoholism qualified him for benefits. Again he lost. Then he saw a psychiatrist, who diagnosed him with "personality disorder with dependent, antisocial, and passive-aggressive features." This did the trick. A court in 1991 found that his "psychological abnormalities combined with alcoholism lead to the conclusion that he can't meet the minimum standards of a normal competitive work setting." He was, in other words, unemployable.

The 1984 Reform Act further shifted the disability determination process away from objective medical evidence and toward much fuzzier, non-medical indicators, such as a patient's own description of his condition and his participation in "activities of daily living" and "social functioning" in determining his ability to work. Evidence of the claimant's behavior necessarily comes from family and friends—many of whom have a financial interest in the disability decision.

Because the 1984 act also increased the role of age, education, and work experience in disability decisions, someone who has worked and has some skills can now be denied disability, while someone with the identical impairment but no work history can be found disabled—a clear inequity.

As a direct result of the act, mental impairments had become a major portion of the agency's caseload by the mid-1990s. By that time, fully 30 percent of all SSI beneficiaries were classified as mentally impaired. By comparison, all other categories of impairments—with the exception of mental retardation—were then in the single digits.

The surge in the number of mentally impaired disability recipients has altered the demographics of the beneficiary population. The average SSDI recipient is now under fifty. The typical SSI recipient is in his thirties with a high school education or less. Younger recipients stay on the rolls longer; younger recipients alleging mental impairments stay the longest of all. According to the SSA, individuals between the ages of eighteen and thirty-four with mental impairments stay on SSDI for 25.5 years, 39 percent longer than the average for that age group.

This liberality toward mental impairment is placing severe strains on SSA. "The more claims we pay, the more people apply," laments the chief administrative law judge in Chicago, Stephen Ahlgren. The annual caseload per administrative judge in Chicago has jumped over several years from 250

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to 800 cases. Such caseloads prevent judges from developing cases sufficiently to rebut boilerplate diagnoses. And judges are resolving more and more cases without a hearing—which they can only do if they rule in the claimant's favor.

Though mental illness can incapacitate, the courts seem remarkably credulous toward mental illness claims. A 1989 federal court decision in Massachusetts is typical. The court granted the appeal of Linda Zeitz, forty-two, a former sales rep for Coca-Cola who claimed that she had suffered from agoraphobia since 1978 because of her consumption of "birth control pills, junk food, and large amounts of Tab." According to court records, Zeitz described her illness and her seven-year effort to get on SSI as "a typical story of a woman who finally starts thinking about who she is as an independent person, rather than as an extension of a man and family." Numerous visits to doctors had revealed no medical basis for the palpitations, backaches, and headaches she said she had experienced while on sales calls before she quit her job. One psychiatrist did note in 1979, however, that she had recently stopped her long-running marijuana habit.

At the time of the appeal, Zeitz said she left her apartment only for doctors' appointments, though she had managed to run up an $11,000 credit card debt. She was ignoring a psychiatrist's recommendation that she attend group therapy, relying instead on health food, vitamins, and solitary reading as prescribed by a "naturopath" she consulted. An administrative judge had denied her claim, finding only slight functional limitations and citing an agency rule that if a claimant fails to follow prescribed treatment that would restore the ability to work, he will be denied benefits. But the district court ruled that Zeitz was under no obligation to follow the prescribed group-therapy treatment because "a psychosomatic anxiety-related disorder such as agoraphobia may defy any generally accepted prescribed treatment requiring the will of the individual to recover." The court remanded the case for further hearings.

The beast that lies beneath the entire mental impairment caseload is substance abuse. Dig deep enough, and you will find drugs and alcohol throughout the disability system, according to David Fiske, an analyst at the General Accounting Office. Fiske tells of a case that focused exclusively on the claimant's bad back. Buried in the medical records was the information that he relaxed on Friday nights by drinking a case of beer.

Morton Gold, the Social Security attorney in Savannah, calls addiction the "Vietnam quagmire of the agency." In the past, SSA actually gave benefits for addiction and alcoholism, if the claimant could show irreversible organ damage. But the courts struck down that precondition as too harsh, putting in its place the requirement that the addict must have lost the ability to control his addiction. At least 250,000 diagnosed addicts and alcoholics were on the disability rolls, receiving approximately $1.4 billion annually in benefits in the mid-1990s.

In 1991, officials of the SSA's Chicago office requested guidance from headquarters in Baltimore regarding a type of claimant, exemplified by "Ronald, C.," that they were seeing more and more frequently. An addict who used IV drugs three or four times a day and consumed three pints of wine daily, Ronald had spent his life in and out of prison for drug-related crimes. He was currently awaiting trial for shoplifting. The conundrum exemplified by Ronald: How should the agency evaluate someone's capacity to work if he has resided mostly in prison?

An associate commissioner for disability at SSA headquarters issued an agency response that must have gladdened the heart of many a convict: While confinement in an institution does not establish the existence or severity of an impairment, she wrote, it may be "suggestive of factors that are reflective of diagnosis and severity." In other words, serving time for drug-related crime worked in your favor for getting benefits—and, given the twelve-month retroactivity for SSDI benefits, you could get paid for doing so!

In 1996, Congress eliminated drug addiction or alcoholism *per se* as a ground for benefits. If, however, somebody claims psychosis or other disabilities that are the result of substance abuse, he can still collect benefits, if he is deemed disabled. A large percentage of the old addiction caseload simply returned to the rolls, claiming other ailments.

Federal disability has a vital role to play in supporting people with serious maladies, but this ability is threatened by the over-extension of the concept of disability. Indeed, the greatest burden on the agency arises from its having collapsed the categories of social dysfunction and disability. By awarding benefits for self-destructive behavior, we have created yet another set of incentives for failure. ◆

Heather Mac Donald is a John M. Olin Fellow at the Manhattan Institute and a contributing editor to City Journal. *This article is adapted from her book,* The Burden of Bad Ideas: How Modern Intellectuals Misshape Our Society *(Ivan R. Dee).*

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Correspondence

Betty Macbeth

WHAT A THUMPING *The Women's Quarterly* gives the sophist-feminists, and high time too. Your piece about Betty Friedan [*TWQ* 24] is downright dynamite! Our first feminist saint is nothing more than a direct descendant of the three witches of *Macbeth.*

And bravo to Julia Duin's "Death, Divorce, and Dismemberment" [*TWQ* 24] about books kids are reading today—an appropriate work-up to reading Marx and listening to the vast left-wing conspiracy running American academia.

Natalie Hayes
Brookfield, Ohio

Amo, Amas, Amat —and All That

It's too bad our society doesn't recognize the value of teaching Latin [*TWQ* 25]. Susan Kristol noted that Latin helps with English grammar, certainly a valid point. But then she added, "The best reason to study Latin (and Greek, for that matter) is to confront the amazing truth that some of the best literature of all time is also the first literature of all time."

A smashing insight. Let's hope more educators come to share this view.

Frances Apperson
Via email

Jane Rant

YOU DO YOUR READERS a serious disservice by printing such articles as Ellen Wilson Fielding's "A Jane for All Seasons" [*TWQ* 22]. The dishonesty in her argument against "feminists" and "feminism" is appalling. Has Fielding ever read any feminist writing about Jane Austen? If she has, one surely couldn't tell by her article in

which she merely refers slightingly and scathingly and even mean-spiritedly all the way through to nameless "feminists," never bothering to engage with any real text or feminist writing about Jane Austen. The only name she does cite is C. S. Lewis, and then to bolster her own point.

C'mon folks, if you're going to pretend to honest reporting and scholarship, at least do it the usual way by arguing with real people who make real points instead of arguing against some bunch of unnamed "feminists." To write in the way Fielding has is to engage in the worst kind of biased argument, arguing only against straw men.

Colleen Devlin Barrigar
Via email

Second That Emotion

I READ THE MAGAZINE cover to cover! You do such a great job; I am so glad I belong to a group that has brains as well as humor.

Mary Paine
Dana Point, California

Alone No Longer

I WOULD LIKE TO ADD my sincere thanks to *The Women's Quarterly* and the Independent Women's Forum for your articulate and courageous criticism of feminism. I felt very alone during my college years (1991-1995) for simply questioning the basis of feminist theory.

At the time, I feared that my arguments against widely held feminist assertions were petty and childish games—for so they were treated—and I hardly dared take them seriously myself. When I first came across your publication I felt tremendously relieved to know that I was not entirely alone in my views.

Olalla Carlin
Via email

Esteem in Academe

[REGARDING *TWQ* 25's Education Symposium] The emphasis in education today is on unearned "self-esteem." No one can be permitted to fail because it will harm his self-image. And everyone in the academic establishment has lost sight of the fact that respect of self and others can only be attained through achievement; it is not a gift which can be given.

Cynthia Neil
Englishtown, New Jersey

No Relation...Really

I AM AN ALUMNUS of Presbyterian Day School in Memphis, Tennessee, Class of 1964. Charlotte Hays' essay [*TWQ* 25] on her experiences at a single-sex school, The Lausanne School for Girls, rekindles the warm feelings I have for PDS and its importance in contemporary education to boys trying to find a place among their peers.

Three cheers for Hays and single-sex schools, which provide young people an abiding sense of worth and family and a healthy respect for tradition and progress.

James Hays McIntosh
Holly Springs, Mississippi

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Feminist Holidays:
Through the Year with the Sisterhood

DIDN'T FIND a politically correct feminist calendar under your Christmas tree? That's okay. We'll take you through a few holidays you won't want to miss this year, courtesy of the National Organization for Women.

February 14—A bit of a non-holiday for feminists of the world. The NOW take: "On Valentine's Day, a day that celebrates both romance and long-term commitments, thousands of feminists nationwide are making this plea to fair-minded people in our country: Have a heart; support loving, committed lesbian and gay couples." Suggestions include making V-Day cards that encourage people to stop hate crimes ("Make Love—Not Hate Crimes!"), and staging mock weddings with same-sex couples driving away in cars labeled "Just Married—NOT!"

March 8—International Women's Day. Designated as such by the United Nations, the UN explains things: "International Women's Day is the story of ordinary women as makers of history; it is rooted in the centuries-old struggle of women to participate in society on an equal footing with men. In ancient Greece, Lysistrata initiated a sexual strike against men in order to end war; during the French Revolution, Parisian women calling for 'liberty, equality, fraternity' marched on Versailles to demand women's suffrage." Last year, NOW revisited the celebration in October, by holding a march on Washington, D.C., marking "a new global feminist movement," according to NOW executive vice president Kim Gandy. "We are our sisters' keepers," she said. Yikes.

April 8—National Pay Equity Day, predicated on the myth that it takes American women a year and 98 days to make what a man does in a year. Don't expect to see any NOW-types reading Independent Women's Forum's own *Women's Figures: The Economic Progress of Women in America* at any of their pity parties across the nation. After all, what would they do all year without a glass ceiling?

April 26—Take Our Daughters to Work Day, created by the Ms. Foundation for Women. Eighty-eight percent of Americans, by the way, believe that Take Our Daughters to Work Day does not discriminate against boys, according to a Ms. Foundation-commissioned poll.

August 26—Women's Equality Day, commemorating the day the Nineteenth Amendment was signed in 1920 granting women the right to vote. It doubles as an opportunity to press the ERA cause and is used by NOW as a countdown to…

September 20—Love Your Body Day, sponsored by the NOW Foundation. The proclamation is, "We have come a long way and don't call me baby." For the holiday, NOW arms celebrants with loads of factoids. (Did you know that 38 percent of lesbians smoke?)

On this day, chapters of NOW across the country hold rallies like the "Feed the Models" event in New York's Times Square. NOW activists, surrounded by images of waif models, chant, "What do we want? To see Real Women! When do we want it? NOW!"

At Brown last year, students celebrated by displaying, among other things, an interactive, anatomically correct, life-size Barbie, as well as a sex-toy table that displayed an exhaustive array of multicolored onanistic devices.

The month of October. As one NOW press release whined, "October is a hectic month for feminist activists." It's **Domestic Violence Awareness Month,** so there are "Take Back the Night" demonstrations. It's also **Breast Cancer Awareness Month**—in case you weren't aware. And, October 11 is **National Coming Out Day,** marked by NOW with "Come Out Against Homophobia" actions to highlight "lesbian-baiting." Whew.

~ Kathryn Jean Lopez

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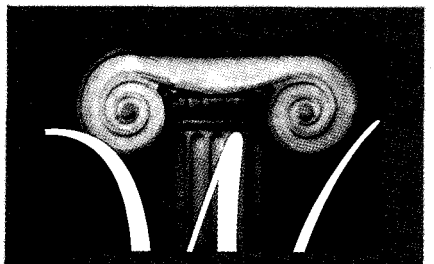

"The Independent Women's Forum is a nonpartisan, pro-free-market think tank very much devoted to having women do what they feel like doing."

– P. J. O'Rourke

Since 1992, the Independent Women's Forum has been taking on the old establishment of feminist organizations—and winning.

Why has the IWF been so successful? Because the women who make up the IWF are not radical ideologues—they're businesswomen, economists, lawyers, truck drivers, and also mothers. Because the IWF promotes individual responsibility, strong families, limited government, and opportunity—policies that help *all* Americans. Because the IWF, a nonpartisan, nonprofit Washington organization, sponsors speaker events and conferences noted for their provocative and free-ranging debates. And because the IWF publishes *The Women's Quarterly*—an intellectual antidote to political correctness—which syndicated columnist Mona Charen praises as, "My type of women's magazine! With humor and sarcasm but also with warmth and passion, these women offer an intelligent refutation of the leading feminist nonsense that is swallowed so uncritically by the mainstream press."

Why not join us? Check "Yes, I want to join" on the enclosed reply card, and you'll receive a year's subscription to *The Women's Quarterly* as well as our insiders-only newsletter *Ex Femina,* invitations to our conferences and speeches, and discounts on books. Most important, you'll be adding another voice of reason—yours!—to the cultural and political debates of our time.

The Women's Quarterly

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